



€ 1847



TO  
CLAUDE G. MONTEFIORE  
IN SINCERE FRIENDSHIP AND DEEP REGARD





# THE ESSENCE OF JUDAISM

BY

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TRANSLATED BY

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## PREFACE TO THE ENGLISH EDITION

To the English version of my book I would wish to prefix a brief explanation of the method I have followed and my general point of view.

But before doing so, let me express my thanks that the book has been enabled to appear in an English translation, and, secondly, to its translators, Mr. Grubwieser and Mr. Pearl, for the very great care and pains which they have devoted to what I am sure must have been no easy task. Lastly, I would desire to thank my honoured friends Claude G. Montefiore, Lionel Jacob and Mrs. Lionel Jacob for having undertaken, at my request, the labour of revising the type-script of the translation and the proofs. One of these three, Lionel Jacob, is, alas, no longer among us to read my thanks. That this English version of my book is dedicated to C. G. Montefiore may be taken as my warm and grateful acknowledgement for what I have for long owed to his personality and his outlook.

The work here presented to the English reader is an attempt to portray the veritable essence or nature of the Jewish religion. It seeks therefore to show the permanent and vital speciality of Judaism as well as its universality. For the universal depends upon, and issues out of, what is special and individual. I seek to exhibit in sharp outline all those characteristics in virtue of which Judaism became an historic force in the history of the world — a force which henceforth cannot be removed, even in thought, from the spiritual life of humanity. To accomplish this, three things are essential. There must be a full grasp of three aspects of one whole: namely, the historical, the systematic and the psychological. I would venture to express this more fully in the following way. The actual facts in their detail, their multiplicity and their changes must be fully known; next, there must be a constant regard to, and seizure of, all those points which in these endless details are constant, uniting and general, giving to the details their particularity, and, indeed, forming their foundation; lastly, the writer must possess a personal, spiritual relation to the details and to the whole; he must be filled with the conviction that there is contained in them a permanent and decisive value. He must appreciate the facts; he must have a quick insight into underlying ideas; he must realise their importance: these conditions are all required for the full understanding of any important historical phenomenon.

But if the essential unity of Judaism is to be made manifest, then, amid the mass of material which presents itself, there be, not infrequently, many discordant particulars.

In all history there is a main road, and there are many by-paths. But in each case, the decisive and determining point is this: there a definite and generating idea which repeatedly shows power and its effect, which manages ever anew to secure victory? The history of every important religion is the history of one fundamental idea which may be traced in all the parts of that religion, in all its creative personalities, and in all the periods of its existence. The essentials of that religion may be considered to be all that wherein this fundamental idea lives and grows, is enriched and renewed. Everything else, however much, at certain periods it may have grown freely, or even rankly, is of minor importance: unessential. The varying relations to that fundamental idea, its vitality or feebleness at any particular moment, give to the different periods of the religion their distinctive place in its history as a whole.

It is thus that the conception of development receives a clear significance. Development will not mean a mere continuity with its ups and downs, its windings and bendings. It is not a mere case of *post hoc, ergo propter hoc*. Development will now mean something different, something more definite. It will signify that the determining fundamental idea has its own varying and distinctive periods; it is sometimes vitally active, sometimes weak; sometimes it acquires a new, yet characteristic, expression, which then again becomes dimmed and debilitated; once more it assumes the form of a living growth, and then again is handed down in an old, fixed form, rigid and petrified. Thus, too, is the significance of the true religious tradition more vividly brought to light. It exists in its worth and verity where the fundamental idea is seized on and realised; it is torn and crumbled where the idea falls into the background or is forgotten.

The object which I have set before myself in this book is to delineate Judaism in relation to this fundamental idea, or to its essential character, as that idea and character have shaped themselves in their long development and in tradition and renaissance.

May my attempt win the sympathy of its readers.

# I. THE CHARACTER OF JUDAISM.

## UNITY AND DEVELOPMENT

Judaism can look back upon a history of some thousands of years. During this period it has learned much and experienced much. Its thought always contained within it the urge to think further, the commanding impulse of movement. And those who professed it travelled many roads of the world, whether by choice or by compulsion, and their way became also the way of Judaism. Like them and with them Judaism has experienced in itself the history of the world and its civilisation. For the spiritual does not merely hover overhead like a pure conception; it consists also in the being and quality of the individuals who have won it for their own. The thoughts of the peoples move on with them through the ages and the lands; and the fortunes, the attainments and the aspirations of the different peoples leave upon their thoughts their inevitable marks.

With its wanderings Judaism has also had its changes, and the story of its people has shaped its destiny. Hence a rich variety of different phenomena and forms lives in the vast scene of its history. Not all of these are of the same sort or value, and nothing could be simpler than to make a composite picture of all that happened during the lower phases of its existence. Life consists of rises and falls; it cannot maintain a constant level, and therefore what is special and characteristic in any manifestation of life is found in the highest level which has been achieved, so long as that level was reached again and again. The essence is characterised by what has been gained and preserved. And such *constancy*, such *essence*, Judaism possesses despite its many varieties and the shifting phases of its long career. In virtue of that essence they all have something in common, a unity of thought and feeling, and an inward bond. The consciousness of possessing a world of their own, that spiritual force which holds together the centrifugal days and hours, has always remained alive in them. They all have their one religious home in which they live.



This unity already had a firm historical foundation in the people out of which Judaism has developed, and in which it is still strongly rooted. To the Jew who realised that he was not merely of yesterday, the distant past told that his life derived from men who had also given birth to his faith. The fathers of his race stood before him as the fathers of his religion. He read aloud the words which told of the God of his ancestors, the God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob, with the voice of a child in whose hand the heritage has been placed, and the thought of the future told him that the days to come would live through him, that his own existence and future would manifest on earth the existence of the ancient God.

These were the voices of the blood which has circulated in every Jew. The surrounding world in which he lived spoke with a different tongue. And soon, within this world the children of the ancestors became dispersed and separated from one another and this fate brought about sometimes, not only separation, but also actual dissolution. Moreover, it became and remained characteristic of the Jewish community to dispense with the ways and means which elsewhere maintain connection between sundering spaces and times. For, as a community, the Jews neither sought, by refusing *their* culture, to turn away in pessimism from their neighbours and their ideas, nor tried, by rigid and binding limitations, to put a circling hedge around their own culture within which they might live in security and calm. If Judaism did preserve its unity, it was by reason neither of the solitude of a world-renouncing existence nor of the centripetal power of dogma and ecclesiasticism.

Admittedly there were times, especially those within memory and so subject to our judgment, when the Jewish community seemed to be completely walled in. But this seclusion was only spacial; it was, moreover, compulsory, and the parts of the whole were separated from one another by their different fortunes. Only at very rare periods did the Jewish world, and even then only certain sections of it, exist in a spiritual ghetto. To the movements which stirred the centuries it was never possible to close the Jewish ghetto entirely, for never did its inhabitants fail to peer out into the wider world. It is sufficient to point to what Jewish

thinkers and scientific investigators derived from, and gave to, general knowledge during the Middle Ages. There is another characteristic: in no other religion is the educated and learned witness to faith so peculiar a feature as in Judaism. Among the countless men who remained faithful to Judaism in the martyrdom of life and in the martyrdom of death, there have been probably only a few who were locked up in their traditions and knew nothing about the ideas that obtained outside.

It could scarcely have been otherwise. The actuality by which the Jews were surrounded spoke only too clearly, and with a convincing logic of its own. Out of the long chain of proofs established by hard facts, and to which each new persecution and oppression added some fresh link, there emerged a similar number of undeniable conclusions which seemed to point in a direction opposed to that which was being followed by Judaism and against its claims. Nevertheless, between what was promised by the old prophecies, and that which each new generation seemed to affirm, the contradiction produced too sharp a tension to make it possible for the Jew simply to retire within himself. The down-trodden, the underdog, will always be able to believe in himself, will, in fact, often be compelled to do so, or perish. But so long as he stands in the midst of the world, it is impossible for him to live merely within the closed circle of his own conceptions, to know of, and to look into, himself alone. This is the exclusive privilege of the heirs to authority.

Moreover, the Jews have always constituted a *minority*, and a minority is constantly compelled to think; that is the blessing of their fate. Again and again they have had to maintain by struggle and thinking that consciousness of truth which success and power comfortingly assure for the rulers and their supporting multitudes. The conviction of the many carries with it the weight of possession; the conviction of the few, the too few, possesses instead the buoyant energy of search and gain. This inner activity became ingrown within Judaism; the serenity of a world ready and complete was far from it. To believe in itself was not vouchsafed to it as a matter of course, but remained the ever renewed demand and goal on which everything depended. And the more confined the outward life, the more insistently had this conviction of life's duty to be sought for and won.

Jewish religious doctrine, whether developed on the casual lines of ancient times, or on the systematical lines of the Middle Ages, was clearly born of this struggle for self-maintenance. It became neither a mere philosophy of the schools, giving the regular proofs as regularly demanded, nor one of the philosophies of the day, which serve only to adorn the powers that be. Since it had to be worked out during the continuous struggle for spiritual existence, it remained for ever a philosophy of religion. It represented the ideal existence of the community as a whole, the concern of all who consciously desired to belong to the community, of all who wanted to be educated, as almost everybody within the religious sphere wished to be. Almost everybody was desirous of exploring within his thoughts the surrounding worlds. Few features have become so characteristic of the Jewish community through the centuries as this sort of philosophising. This never-ending searching and seeking, this meditating and speculating, has given the Jew his idiosyncrasy, the telling profile of his spiritual personality.

In this process of investigating and weighing, now one, now another idea became emphasised. Each thrust and parry brought now this conception and now that into the foreground, so that the outlines of the teaching often appeared to change or tremble. Place and time each contributed the influence of their distinctiveness. However firmly the main foundations of the religion were fixed, however securely established in the communal consciousness, values changed from time to time. And so a certain wavering, to and fro element entered into the circle of Jewish thought; it shows a variety of facets. For this peculiar philosophy something had to be sacrificed; — the certainty of a clearly circumscribed and stable creed, the secure structure of a formula of faith.

Taking the word "dogma" in a somewhat restricted sense, it might be said that Judaism has no dogmas, and therefore no regular orthodoxy. It is obvious that in a positive religion classical phrases would pass from generation to generation as the ancient and holy message of religious truth. Wherever there exists a treasury of faith, a *depositum fidei*, it is expressed in sacred words in which sounds the ringing, swinging song of revelation and of history. But it does not constitute a dogma in the most precise sense of the word. It becomes one only when definite formulas

have been worked out in clear cut conceptions, and have been declared binding by an established and competent authority, as signifying the religious deposit, in the acceptance of which lie orthodoxy and salvation.

None of these presuppositions are to be found in Judaism. There was no necessity for secure, inviolable formulas; for these are only necessary when there lies at the heart of a religion a mystical, consecrating act of faith, which alone can open the door to salvation, and which therefore demands a definite form of conceptual presentation which can be handed down from age to age. Such actions procuring salvation and such gifts of grace are unknown to Judaism; it possesses no such effective actions to bring heaven down to earth. It has always kept within certain limits of sobriety and severity; it demands even more than it gives. That is why it adopted so many commandments, and refused sacraments and their mysteries; if there were ever any tendencies in this direction, they were overcome at a very early stage. Thus there was no necessity to create and to hand down any decisive formulas or creeds to guarantee stability and security.

Nor did the need of a full attainment of complete knowledge demand that the whole sphere of belief should be defined once for all. Only where divine enlightenment and salvation are deemed to be equivalent, where complete knowledge alone — the Gnosis — leads to salvation, and each short-coming or error bars the way, does such a need arise. When the true faith is considered a gift of God, upon which everything depends, then indeed it requires a precise definition and a finality embracing all, then must its whole form of expression be firmly constructed and assured; each gap, each false line, would be fatal. In Judaism articles of faith never attained such importance; they were never a condition of salvation, and did not imply that if you accepted them you had all, if you rejected them you had nothing.

The very idea of "the secret things", which in Judaism appertain to the Divine, was wholly opposed to such an attitude. In Christianity the divine secret is something given, something definite, which can be made visible and tangible; in Judaism it remains in the sphere of the ideal. The Secret is unsearchable; it belongs to God and not to man; it can only be felt. The being of

God is veiled by a distant darkness which no mortal eye can penetrate, and which only devoutness, with its meditation and calm, can even approach. It is the *Commandments* which fully enter into the world of men; to do good, that is also the beginning of all wisdom. Man's duty comes before his knowledge of God, and the knowledge of Him is found in seeking and enquiring rather than in possessing. That which God *demand*s of man is the sphere in which He has placed him; this is the definite and the given. The principles of the Torah are therefore, as the Talmud says, the principles of pious conduct. They are laid down in a religious form, and they have their definite answers. On the other hand, religious doctrine remains in many respects free, and can dispense with definite, final and fettering conclusions. So in Judaism there is lacking yet another important essential of dogma.

There can scarcely be a stronger check to dogma than the high place assigned in Judaism to the pious and good *deed*. A precise conceptual determination of religion comes about most naturally when creed is regarded as knowledge, and when this knowledge is offered to the people as creed. This is often shown in the history of the Church: authors of dogmas were mostly men who came to religion through philosophy, and then re-discovered their philosophy in religion. In philosophy they had found the truth, the old truth and then the new; and now it was to be presented to the multitude in finished form as their religious creed — as the truth for the “poor in spirit”, as Origen has called it, and as, fundamentally, Hegel also takes the creed to be. The religion of the learned and the religion of the ignorant were to be fused together, and made one, by means of dogma. In Judaism this uniting bond was the demand or the command of religious action; this demand was imposed upon all, whether great or small; and it was the same for all; through it were to be created the “kingdom of priests and a holy nation”. Its volume and its intensity expanded so greatly as to leave little or no room for dogma.

Moreover, the Jewish religious community is lacking in the persons by whom dogmas are made. This, at any rate, has been the case since it lost that authority which for a certain period was vested in the Sanhedrin, and thereafter, in a more restricted sense, in the so-called “geonim”. Only an ecclesiastical body is entitled

to lay down binding formulae of creed, — a body speaking in the name of the community, demanding obedience, and endowed with the means of enforcing it against those reluctant to obey. The possessor of power decides what shall be the truth. In its whole adamant consistency this fashioning of dogmas manifested itself in the early centuries of the Church, when certain authorities enforced the acceptance of a given religious dogma by imperial decree or by the sword, and also later, after the Reformation, when there was established the principle that the lord of the land was also the lord of its religion. The ecclesiastical bodies, whether bishop, pope, council, or any secular church authority, give their binding decisions. But in Judaism such authorities never existed. True, there was an assured tradition regarding its succession of teachers, but no ecclesiastical or secular hierarchy of any kind. Even when, from time to time, established authorities came into existence — though soon disappearing again — they had no powers in matters of faith. So the powers were wanting in virtue of which, in so far as the need had been felt for them, dogmas might have been set up. No single body was entitled to put authoritative boundaries for all. The will and the conviction to belong to Judaism always remained the real and decisive factor.

Attempts have indeed been made from time to time to establish rigid formulae. In an important passage of the Talmud there is a sentence according to which those who deny certain doctrines are refused eternal life; it is significant that it speaks of those who deny what is true and not of those who assert what is false. During the Middle Ages, articles of faith were set up by Karaite teachers under Islamic influence. It is probable that it was the same influence through which certain other religious thinkers of the same period, among them one held in high and lasting esteem, essayed to embrace the whole compass of Jewish doctrine in a number of articles. But these articles have never become dogmas. An enquiring religious philosophy has always been able to maintain its position, and even this philosophy produced method rather than system. Principles always remained of greater importance than results. There was always tolerance, and even indifference, towards forms of expression; ideas alone were clung to. Judaism, and the Jew along with it, retained an unorthodox air; they

were never either able or inclined to rest in the peacefulness of dogma.

Many on that account found something lacking, so much so indeed that at times the opinion was expressed outside that Judaism was everything except a religion. Religion was not discerned in Judaism because there were not to be found in it fixed conceptions, the definite wording of a creed. And even within, in the Jewish community itself, this self-same want was not infrequently felt, particularly in times of transition; men missed the well constructed sentences, to which they could cling. Without dogma, the faith appeared to lack that safeguard by which it could be clearly expressed and handed down. In this feeling there is doubtless an element of truth. But this absence of crutch and of binding support belongs to the very nature of Judaism; in it lies part of its historic character. One of its peculiarities is that it has no dogma, but that it has religious philosophy instead. This is due to its origin and its history. This philosophy was to offer what was good in dogma, but to avoid its dangers. Its duty was to fashion the content of religion ever anew. Religion was, in reality, best preserved in this way, and at the same time it was protected from being hemmed in by formula and system. Preventing the formation of rounded off and completed conceptions there always arose the demand for the never ceasing labour of thought.

This alone sufficed to enable Judaism to preserve its intellectual elasticity and freshness. By reason of its rigidly defined expression, dogma is always bound up with a specific period of learning and culture, and so its fate becomes ultimately entwined with that of the particular period. From this entanglement Judaism was able to keep itself free, and therefore it did not become involved in the conflict between religious creed and religious truth as often as other religions. And since its ideas never stood committed to any period, they were able to accept or to decline the demands of the times, and then to turn and receive the spirit of the future.

From early times the *struggle for spiritual existence* had been demanded of the Israelite religion, and it developed the capacity always to maintain or reconquer its own special life. Its sphere of faith stood opposed to those of all other creeds; only by believing in itself, a belief which had to be achieved ever anew, was

it able to live on. Any sort of compromise would have meant spiritual downfall and, finally, annihilation. "Thou shalt" became "I will". Out of the imperious necessity of spiritual struggle sprang the determination never to yield either to power or time, and the will to go its own way. The courage to be its true self became its rule of existence, gave to the Jewish religion a *peculiar* life of its own.

In the earliest centuries of its history Israel was already confronted with this task. The days of the forefathers, the days of earlier life, had to be renounced, the conflict between the two had to be fought out. "Put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the river and in Egypt; and serve ye the Lord." And as from the past, so were they to free themselves from the present. All around an all-conquering civilisation drew its circle of power and allurements; it was imperative to oppose it, and yet to live with it and within it. The people of Israel, who were the living carriers of their religion, did not come into being in a single day, did not live on a secluded island, like the autodidact philosopher, that self-made and self-sufficient sage, as conceived in the Middle Ages. For as the Jews breathed in the air of the countries in which they lived, they also participated in their internal and their external history. And thus it was that foreign influence was bound to enter at every gate.

The varied elements of civilisation which Jewish genius has been able to absorb in the course of time bear witness to its *creative power*; for it has proved itself capable of digesting and completely assimilating them. Very seldom did it happen to lose itself in them, and even then its own free and peculiar nature would eventually triumph, and succeed in imbuing them with a character of its own. Thus already in early times certain words were adopted, but they were soon filled with completely different connotation, they began in fact to stand for something fresh. If two different persons say the same thing, the same idea is not necessarily conveyed. Thus the word which the Bible uses to designate a prophet betrays its foreign derivation. But how much has been added to this word in Israel! With what a peculiar ring, with what original force and depth of thought, did this word become vested! Whatever value this word has acquired, and whatever exceptional quality it has



retained, is of exclusively Israelitish origin. For purposes of religious etymology, as also for the purpose of tracing the course of human civilisation, the origin of this or many another hotly discussed word may be of importance, but for the meaning of the Jewish religion it is not.

Sometimes, indeed, some foreign conception or other slipped in with the word; it was borrowed, but yet, in the long run, nothing had to be sacrificed on its account. If it was permitted to enter, yet sooner or later it was overcome; not until it had been transformed and recast could it find a resting place in Jewish thought. That which was of lesser value was at last left by the road-side, or was rendered harmless by its being transported into quite another sphere. Only that which could be made Jewish was taken into permanent possession. To however much the Jewish religion in the course of time opened the door of its mind, its essential *character* was never changed, it never really lost itself. The very fact that Judaism preserved its monotheism stern and pure speaks plainly enough in support of this contention.

What this really means can be appreciated by comparison with many other instances in the history of religion. Religions which have found their homes in new lands, whether adopted or captured, have come upon customs, habits and ideas; these they have accepted, but without completely incorporating them, and often without even attempting to come to a clear understanding with them. They simply put up with whatever they happened to encounter, or deemed it sufficient to transform the external appearance, if necessary. It was easy, at the cost of their own individualities, to win victories. That Buddhism, for example, should concede to its adherents everything, and guarantee, even to the lowest forms of religion, an undisturbed existence, is implied in the very nature of this religion, and has in fact been a constant cause of its expansion. The greatest scholars of Islam have said of it that it is a cloak which covers many things, and under which many pagan ideas and activities can find warm shelter. In like manner it has been said of the Greek Church that it wears the garb of the old Greek religion, with a Christian covering and envelope. And could not these examples be increased in number? It has always been the case that mass successes mean a diminution

of distinctiveness in the religion which succeeds. Speedy external gains have always entailed internal loss.

In the Jewish religion there was a limit beyond which nothing foreign could be admitted. To defend the barrier a difficult and lengthy contest was often necessary; and this contest did not achieve the same success at all times and at all places. But the decisive battle for retaining distinctiveness was always accepted and always won. In times of the greatest temptation and danger especially, the peculiar character of the religion was preserved with the greatest surety and shaped with the deepest decisiveness. Just where Judaism had to associate with old and new civilisations, whose dissolvent influences other religions had not been strong enough to resist, Judaism remained truest to itself. The success consisted in the abiding continuity of character. A long history of spiritual labour can tell much about this self-conflict; for it was a conflict freely accepted, an elected task. It arose from no mere concatenation of circumstances; it was no mere natural process. That is already made clear by the fact that historical personalities, such as prophets, reformers, and religious thinkers, created all this and stamped it with their spiritual seal. It was they who pointed the way for the religion and assigned to it its place.

With these observations enough has been said to show wherein the independence of Israel consisted. Its originality consists not in the originality of each spiritual element, or in a complete lack of tradition or of connection with the past: such originality would in fact mean nothing but spiritual isolation and poverty. Its originality lies in its power of spiritual conquest, the capacity to do successful battle for that individuality of the spirit, whereby the material of religion is shaped and made alive. Distinctiveness, originality, lie in the energy and in the strength of self-preservation; moreover, all genius of personality is at bottom a great patience which never tires. It is not in the germs, but in the productive power, in the ability to beget and to shape, that independence and peculiarity manifest themselves. That is where Goethe, who at times had doubts even as to his own independence, found them to be. "The finest sign of originality", he says, "consists in one's ability to develop a received idea in so prolific a manner that no one else would easily have discovered how much lay hidden therein."

This *originality in moulding and shaping*, this continuity of personality — leaving aside for the moment the religious discoveries of the prophets — is not one of the least considerable factors in Israel's independence. Its distinctiveness is in no small degree a distinctiveness realised in history.

What gives our life its value is that which we have become, not that which we were at birth. Endowment and heritage mean much and yet nothing: the great thing is what we develop out of them. It is not qualities and ideas which make the man, but man who makes something out of his knowledge and his qualities. That is as true of the individual as of a whole nation. In both, the *personality* which they have achieved is the decisive factor. For the very reason that this "greatest happiness of the children of the earth" has become the property of the Jewish religion in the persons of its adherents, does it possess such an exceptional individuality and so unique a history; hence also the number of happy and suggestive ideas to which it has given birth. Only on this account did achievement and word acquire their intrinsic worth and their original power, and only thus did the Jewish conception of life, and the Jewish estimate of the world, acquire their preeminent solemnity.

This has not infrequently been left out of account. Whenever connections between the Bible and the old religious products of other peoples were discovered, or believed to have been discovered, there was always some disposition to deny to the Jewish religion the rights of creation and originality. It was always the most recent discovery which now really *did* reveal the beginning of truth, the hitherto unknown origin of knowledge. It is an essentially human inclination to see in magical outlines all which emerges suddenly and in unexpected form, out of some mysterious remoteness. Only the passage of time can teach an accurate valuation. How often in our times, for example, has it been attempted to show that the peculiar originality of the civilisation of Greece was dependent upon some piece of recently discovered antiquity, and by this means to foist upon it a foreign origin. And as for the Bible, it seemed to prove a highly unbiassed and critical mind if an attempt were made more and more to deprive its thoughts of that originality and independence, which they had hitherto been

supposed to possess. Here too were at work the same tendencies which can often be observed elsewhere. When in the seventeenth century new philosophies emerged into the world, it became a favourite occupation to compare every one of the great thinkers with an alleged forerunner in order to drag him from his throne. With an abundance of learning men collected together the Cartesians before Descartes, the Spinozists before Spinoza, and therewith it was thought that the genius had been bereft of his genius. The unessential similarity caused the essential difference to be over-looked. So also the pre-Israelite Israelites were discovered again and again, now in Egypt or Syria, now in Arabia or Babylon. And the world is even now not yet quite used up! The latest exploration is not necessarily the last!

Primitive and rudimentary forms have their value for the understanding of the *origin*, for the embryological history of religion. But for the purpose of *judging* and for the actual knowledge of the *essence* of an historical phenomenon, only the characteristic and classic forms may be considered. Only by following the course of its development can one determine what a religion comprises and what are its vital chords. The very thing, which, in the origin, constituted an exception, may frequently emerge in the course of history as the essential, as the most important, element. The characteristic peculiarity is only brought out with the passing of the centuries. It is a truism that "the child is father to the man", but not until we study its progress into manhood are we able to know what were the distinctive peculiarities of the child. The real significance of the Jewish religion lies in its ascent, in the height which it has reached and maintained, and not in the rudimentary forms out of which it has risen.

The individual detail acquires its character in Judaism either by its having led up to the summit, or by representing the whole in a small part. Each definite, individual thought, each demand and promise, are in this religion parts of a great whole; they were led up to and they lead on; whilst words and phrases found among the "pre-Israelite Israelites" are, at best, merely isolated odds and ends. A moral law found in the Bible is not the same thing as the same law in a cuneiform inscription on a cylinder. From time to time we find some beautiful feature in pictures, the work of tribes of

long ago, but there is a vast deal of difference between our finding it there, and our being able to contemplate or admire it in a statue of Phidias or in a painting by Apelles. Where can we find a *Bible*, or a line of *prophets*, or a *religious history*, like or equal to those of the Israelites? Till that is done we must leave to Israel its unique importance, or, to speak theologically, the possession of Revelation.

Everything in the Hebrew Bible points to the path which the Jewish religion had to follow — from Abraham to Moses, from Moses to Jeremiah, from Jeremiah to the author of the Book of Job. The conception of *development*, and particularly of *development conditioned by personalities*, is indispensable for the understanding of the origin and growth of the Jewish religion. The same applies to the understanding of its subsequent history. It is not an inner equality of the periods, but an abiding connection, a continuity between the different epochs, which gives Jewish history its homogeneous character. This character was not understood until the principle of development, by virtue of which it had been formed, became known. Every system of the Jewish religion is necessarily also a *history* of the religion. Only in its historical totality can Judaism be really understood. The principle of evolution is so essential to it that, even in the two creeds, which derived both directly and indirectly from the Jewish religion, this principle, to a greater or lesser extent, also applies, as a result of their origin. Christianity has been specially praised for being the “most changing” of religions. But one of the fathers of our modern science of comparative religion has justly pointed out with emphasis that it possesses this virtue only on account of its connection with Judaism.

In all cases of evolution there exist *stationary* elements, which assure equilibrium amidst continuous change, and dynamic forces which impel towards further progress. The distinction between these two qualities may also be designated as that between the *authoritative* and the free, unfettered factors in religion. Nevertheless, it often occurs that that which has been attained in the course of pressing forwards becomes finally an element of conservatism. What at first was a bold questioning becomes not infrequently an obvious truth to a later generation. An antithesis

to one generation becomes a thesis to another. Here in particular the regular movement of evolution reveals itself. The path of progress runs from paradox to commonplace, from violent opposition to obvious matter of course.

In Judaism the static elements consist especially in the existence of a *Holy Book*. Every definite religious possession, every religious tradition, has a permanent dead weight of its own. With the old Israelite tradition of the Patriarchs ending in Moses, an historical foundation was laid. How much more true is this then of the Book which, as *the Book*, binds together the legends of the days of the forefathers, the words of the men of God, and the preachings of the prophets, as evidence of God, so as to preserve them for all generations. It is in the Hebrew Bible that Judaism has its secure immovable foundation; it is the static and permanent element amid the changing movement of phenomena. It was no longer by paths to which the course of destiny leads that the life of the old religious ideas was conditioned and shaped; they stand now upon the firm ground of their own existence, the spiritual foundation of their history. This foundation had indeed to be won by battle and struggle, but it became on that account all the more definitely an intimate possession.

The historical and religious content was thus not merely attained, but it became the established *authority* in the changing eras. Prophecy and teaching were no passing phenomena or vanishing periods of history. That which they beheld and strove to attain remained the ideal, and that which they demanded became religious duty. It is a common contention that Israelite prophecy was followed by Jewish legalism; the two are regarded as two epochs in contrast and opposition to one another. But in reality the contrast between them is no more or less than between the epoch in which a truth is fought for, and the epoch when the truth is accepted. No definite change, but an acceptance or an acknowledgment, took place. To the Scribes the Prophets were not mere obsolete predecessors; they did not feel towards them like a new school of thought towards an old one. Rather they became and remained the proclaimers of eternal truth. Men, so regarded and exalted, whose words become Holy Writ — not merely literature — are never given up; they are not merely men of bygone days.

The Hebrew Bible is the most important and authoritative element in Judaism. But it is not the only one. Just as it was once preceded by one tradition, so it was soon succeeded by another, the "Oral Law", which strives to penetrate into the soul of the written word and to relate it to all the events of existence, to regulate religiously, and to moralize, all the conditions and activities of life, to realise the ideal through the medium of the whole community. This tradition too, which was at last firmly established in the *Talmud*, had to fight for recognition; and it too became a conservative power. As far as religious influence, inner power, and influence are concerned, it need scarcely be pointed out that the *Talmud* takes a lower place than the Bible, which moreover, as divine revelation, enjoys its own incomparable classic position. But as a conservative factor the *Talmud* often surpasses it. Intention and destiny assigned to it the significance of constituting a protective fence around Judaism. And as such it has been specifically honoured and cherished during lengthy periods of oppression. As the *Talmud* guarded, so was it guarded itself. For next after the Scriptures, and side by side with them, it prevented the religion of Israel from going astray into strange domains. Both the canonical character acquired by the Hebrew Bible, and the decisive authority attained by the *Talmud*, became and remained of paramount importance for the purpose of maintaining equilibrium in the history of Judaism and for its assured continuance.

Yet both these would have been and remained mere static powers, but for the driving forces of development. A dynamic element lay in what the Bible was for *faith*. For to faith it contained the *word of God*; therefore it was the Word for all generations: each generation had to be able to find in it what was peculiar and immediately present to itself. For a *divine* revelation is necessarily intended for man as such, and not only for those who live just when it is first delivered; it must tell all of us about ourselves. "Thou art the man" is the motto which stands as the heading of revelation. One has to say to oneself and to others; "For thee also God has performed these miracles", "Thou too art come out of Egypt", "Thou too standest before Sinai to receive the word of revelation". Each generation heard in the Bible's

words its own wishes, its hopes, and its thoughts; each individual his own heart's desire. The Bible lay so near to the heart that it could not be viewed from the historical standpoint. Never in Judaism did it become an ancient book which was simply read by those who came after it; it remained the book of life, the book for each new day.

But each new day brought *new things*: *new cares* and also *new demands* with their moral and religious claims, their connections and implications. For the cares the Bible had to bring consolation, for the demands satisfaction; everything had to be found in it. And, not least of all, fresh periods taught fresh truths, and with these too the Hebrew Bible had to deal. With each dominating idea it had to come to some understanding; and with every important thought it had to compare, and, where possible, unite itself. When any new philosophy of life was adopted, the Hebrew Bible too had to take on a different meaning, and the ancient word showed a power and wealth of changing significations. So the Bible itself moved forward, and *each period won its own Bible*. What remarkable differences there are between what a Philo, an Akiba, a Maimonides, and a Mendelssohn, deduce from the Hebrew Bible! One and the same book, and yet it was in many respects so different to each of them. As the Talmud has often phrased it, each epoch has its own Biblical interpreters. This is most happily expressed in that wonderful legend of Moses, who heard Rabbi Akiba expounding the Torah, and was unable to recognise it as his own. Men consciously felt that the Bible was always being recreated. Moreover, it is in the nature of every true and great idea to struggle forward to ever greater precision and clarity. It enshrines within itself that power to give and to demand which is essential to progress. Unfinished and unbounded, each creative idea of the human spirit reveals itself to men, and is thus ever able to attract thought unto itself from all sides. Again and again it asks that men should occupy themselves with it. How rightly to do so is the problem. It is impossible to draw near and close to the Hebrew Bible without feeling this task to be a sort of spiritual necessity. And only he who has felt it has truly let the greatness of this book fill his soul.

That which the character of the Hebrew Bible and the changing times demanded soon became conceived in Judaism as a *religious*



*obligation*. The necessity for it was grasped, and so it was freely accepted. Men realized that the teaching of the Lord was no heritage which comes ready made, but rather a heritage which has to be won. Men felt that they owed to their religion the same duties as to all other spiritual possessions. The truths of the Bible were not to be considered as a gift, but rather as something which had first to be conquered. It became a commandment, rising above many others, to "study", to *explore the Scriptures*. To explore, that means to consider something less as a gift than as a charge. Rigidity, compulsion, restraint, and immutability of tradition cannot be reconciled with such a conception. Faith on mere authority is, therefore, impossible. The duty to "explore" entails new thought and a moving forward. The end becomes the beginning, and the solution the problem. This duty demanded, and actually brought it about in Judaism, that the traditionally received doctrine should not be accepted as something completely finished, but as something which should constantly renew itself in the conscience of the community. Hence the desire to realise the ancient word again and again, to expound it, to take up some fresh attitude, even of contradiction, towards it, to acquire the feeling that it can never come to an end, to follow it just like one engaged in a search.

This feeling was favoured in Judaism, particularly in later times, by the fact that the *author* usually remained in the background of his work, was often even left wholly out of account. If it is the individual person who is listened to, if he stands at the centre, it naturally happens that he becomes a dominating and restraining influence in regard to his own words. If the idea is considered to be of greater importance than its originator, one can deal with it with less restraint. In this particular connection *the form of the Hebrew Bible*, the very way in which it is written, is of special importance. The Hebrew Bible as a whole is, so to speak, rough hewn, unfinished, and unsystematic; it presents but "fragments of a great confession". It leaves many things open; it is full of questions, and so impels to further thought. What is only indicated could, and in fact had to, be followed up. Passages which appeared to be contradictory had to be reconciled; what had been left open had to be filled in. The Hebrew Bible

is on the one hand the most permanent factor in Judaism, and, on the other hand, the most dynamic; it led far. In its capacity as a canon it is the static element — for it is always the *same* book, ever attracting to itself all religious thinking and searching. But it has been no less a most effective factor for progress, through its importance to faith, through the creative power of its ideas, and through its own peculiar style. Much the same may be said of the “Oral Law”, which takes up the duty of that further thought which the Bible required. The very notion of an “Oral Law” implies, as has been justly pointed out, that it can never be brought to a conclusion; it is never complete. It could be recorded in writing, but no definite limits could be set to it. It kept on working as an important element of freedom and development.

Thus it was possible to assume an attitude of *independence* towards everything handed down by tradition and even towards the words of the Bible — an independence the definiteness of which has often been underestimated. There is too little recognition e. g. of that firmness with which the “Oral Teaching” subordinates in the Bible the lower to the higher. The biblical commandments were compared with one another, and their relative values considered. Attempts were made to establish certain fundamental ideas, under which many other ideas and commands could be grouped. These ideas were discovered now in this word of the Scriptures, now in that: in the behest to love one’s neighbour as oneself, in the teaching that man was made in God’s image, in the pious conviction of trust in God, and in the knowledge of God as manifested in life. New criteria were applied to the Holy Book; men began to examine and to judge it.

The famous phrase, “But I say unto you”, is no new phrase of a later period; it is already heard in the Prophets and the Psalms. We can clearly hear it in the injunction that man should circumcise the foreskin of his heart, that he should rend his heart and not his garments, in the saying that love is more acceptable to God than sacrifice, or that the broken spirit is the true offering, or in the teaching that God will put the law into man’s inward parts and write it in his heart. This unfettered independence of religious feeling found expression also later on; it is not peculiar to the Gospel. From the Talmud the same note rings out clearly to us; it

needs only to be put into the required form for it to sound to us the same. Then we may hear it often. "Ye have heard that it was said to them of old time: thou shalt not commit adultery. But I say unto you: he who glances in his lust even at the corner of a woman's heel is as if he had committed adultery with her." "Ye have heard that six hundred and thirteen commandments were given to Moses. But I say unto you: do not search through the *Torah*, for thus saith the Lord to the House of Israel, seek *me*, and ye shall live." "Your teachers enumerate to you how many commands the *Torah* contains, but I say unto you: deeds of love are worth as much as all the commandments of the Law." "You pious ones pursue self-denial and seek to aggravate your burdens — are you not satisfied with that which the *Torah* forbids, that you also must forbid?" "It was said to the men of olden time: him whom the court condemns, the court shall put to death. But I say unto you: if a court puts to death only one man in seventy years, that court is a court of murderers." "You know that it is written in the *Torah*: he who has sinned, let him offer up a sacrifice, and he shall be purged of his sin. But I say unto you in the name of God: let the sinner repent and he shall be forgiven." "You have heard: God visits the sins of the fathers upon the children and the children's children. But after Moses did there not arise in Israel another prophet who spoke thus: only the soul which sinneth shall die?" Thus even in the case of a sentence in the Ten Commandments, some other word in the Bible is taken as the determining truth!

These examples show the way in which religious thought and religious feeling became self-conscious. They illustrate how, at one time, in order to secure the determining answer, a particular phrase in the Bible was opposed by some other, which seemed to convey something deeper and more inward, how, at another time, there was an appeal to the moral conscience itself to give the decision, and how, at yet another time, the nature of the God of love appeared to the enquiring mind as the supreme law, laying down judgment. These phenomena are not mere exceptional instances, not the isolated utterances of a single individual, but the teaching of men who rank as "the wise", the men who became the masters and the leaders of the people.

That there was nothing accidental or ephemeral about all this emerges from the very fact that so much is found working in one and the same direction. All those human and physical qualities which the language of the Hebrew Bible attributes to God were lifted by constant purpose into the spiritual plane. The religious and ethical character of the ancient festivals was emphasized and brought out more distinctly; they were developed and carried forward on lines, traces of which can be found in the old ordinances of the Bible. Many an old conception was filled with some clearer and richer content. The teachers began to hear in that name of God, which is most frequently used in the Bible, the meaning of "All-merciful"; wherever His name was spoken, the love of God seemed to be indicated. It was almost possible to dispense with every sentence which spoke specially of the divine quality of love; for this very name proclaimed on each page of the Bible that, just as a father has pity upon his children, so the Lord has pity on those who fear Him, that in His wrath He forgets not His love. In that word of the Bible which originally stood for justice, there came to be found the meanings of equity and benevolence, which were to give justice its true touch, if it is to be a living justice, and the word for the severe virtue of justice ultimately acquired the meaning of almsgiving or charity. Whenever the Hebrew Bible addressed its message to men generally, there was found in it the conception of humanity, bridging all that separates and divides, and all differences of race, so that "a heathen who occupies himself with the Torah takes as lofty a place as the High Priest". If a psalm speaks of the destruction of the "sinner", the word was understood to mean the destruction of his "sin". For it is not the evil person, but rather evil itself, which is condemned. "May sin disappear from the face of the earth, for then evil-doers shall be no more."

In later times too this freshness and independence, with which the awakening to new religious knowledge with its demands confronted the received traditions of the past, were preserved in Judaism. A man of such unbending sternness of faith as Maimonides was prepared to unite the eternity of the world, if it could be proved, with his biblical Monotheism. "The doors of interpretation", so he said, "are not closed." He was a man who in his ideas went further than many of his time and after. But the

whole of Jewish religious philosophy reveals a similar freedom and capacity of original thought, and the same is true of the manifold ways of interpreting the Bible, and, though it must be admitted only within certain limits, of the investigation of religious laws. The Jews generally remained quite conscious of their religious rights. The Jews of the Middle Ages regarded this freedom as a characteristic and distinguishing virtue of Judaism. When a polemical pamphlet of the fourteenth century states that the view that "the chambers of human intelligence are dark, and the understanding with its proofs and deductions can illuminate nothing" is opposed to Jewish doctrine, it only expresses the feeling of the times. Indeed the forces of self-reliance and of intellectual independence were then alive in Judaism to an extent that can probably find no parallel in the religious life of those days.

That this should have been so was due to the fact that the elements of authority contained a definite tendency towards further development, since the ancient Scriptures could not become ancient because the command for a constant study of them always brought men back from the past to the present. The very authority itself was not dogmatic. This struggle for the precise idea, the precise command, the precise law (a hundred-headed question without a final answer) always began anew. So it was that the Bible remained the Bible, but the Talmud arose after it, and after the Talmud religious philosophy began and continued side by side with the Talmud, and after that mysticism arose and continued side by side with religious philosophy, and so it went on, the old always remaining and the new ever growing up by its side. Judaism did not affix itself to any particular period so as to finish up with it; never did it become complete. The task abides, but not its solution. The old revelation always becomes a new revelation: Judaism experiences a *continuous renaissance*.

It is this recurring renaissance, this power of regeneration, which gives to the historical life of Judaism its character. Judaism is always awakening and opening its eyes. Each of its epochs was shaped by some particular period during which Judaism discovered a world of its own which it longed to possess. The urge to realise thought and commandment in practice did indeed cause

the Jews to dig themselves ever deeper down into tradition, to pile layer upon layer, but at last it ever impelled them to clamber up and to look and to seek, in order, with their own spirit and their own heart, to revivify anew the old religion. Thus its history is able to gain from both new places and new periods. Since the beginning of the dispersion from Palestine the spiritual life of Judaism has wandered from one territory to another; after leaving old habitations, it always succeeded in providing itself with others. The same thing is true of the succession of the ages, the rise of new epochs; new days begin, and new ideas arise. The prophetic word of the "new heaven and earth" was ever being realised in the history of Judaism.

Only occasionally, during periods of transition, was the religious past a heavy burden for Judaism to bear. The Jews were always conscious of possessing a unique history, with all its blessings; they felt elevated and consoled by the consciousness of the divine rule throughout all the centuries of the life of the Jewish people. But as a drag upon, and impediment to, the present, the religious past was seldom felt. Almost each period was convinced that it possessed a spiritual existence of its own; it felt its religion to be a living reality. The men who trod new paths of thought always believed that they were standing upon the firm ground of Judaism. Few features are so manifest in the religious literature of Judaism as this its freedom from the past. True, there were often tensions between old doctrines and new conceptions, but they were for the most part tensions in which life seeks to expand itself. Judaism preserved its actuality: it lived in the present.

It is, of course, true that there were periods, sometimes rather prolonged, which showed signs of weariness, when life appeared to stand still, and not infrequently ideas were put forward which fell flat and were neglected. Nothing could be simpler than to find in one Jewish document or another in any century passages which do not lead up to the ideal. But this does not condemn Judaism and its history, for Judaism has always been able to lift itself up again. It was ever able to re-discover itself and to find its path. Its true history is the history of a renaissance. Of many peoples and communities it has been said that they had too glorious a past still to expect a future. Even if this judg-

ment be applicable to any religion, it can certainly not be applied to the *Jewish* religion and its adherents, simply on account of this continual renaissance in its history — not to mention the great idea of the future as created in Judaism. The ancient prophets walk through the world of Judaism, like living geniuses reawaking from generation to generation.

## THE PROPHETIC RELIGION AND THE COMMUNITY OF FAITH

Just as the essence of art must be grasped through the medium of the great artists and their works, so the nature of religion can best be studied through the geniuses of religion. If, therefore, we desire to understand Judaism, it is essential that we learn to understand its *Prophets*. Indeed this is made all the more indispensable by reason of the fact that Israel was shaped and moulded by the labour of its prophets in a spiritual struggle of centuries' duration. And the very life of Judaism justifies them: for it was they who gave it its spiritual bent and direction, from which it is true that it deviated at times, *but* only to return to it in the end. It was they who stamped its character. What was peculiar to their desire and their belief became and remained characteristically Jewish; to them belonged all that was left over as the sifted product of the searching and purifying labour of time. In their thoughts the Jewish people found its goal and its truth. They constructed Israel's history.

Above all else, the *intuitive and practical* character of the attainments of their discernment is a significant feature of the prophets of Israel. Their thoughts, to employ the phraseology of Vauvenargues, emerge from the heart. "*Les grandes pensées viennent du cœur.*" They do not attempt to present a philosophy or a theology, their business is neither ingenious syllogisms nor learned solutions of religious problems. Nothing with them is in fact the outcome of investigation of any sort or kind. They do not want to fathom the first condition of all existence, the first principles of all happenings; they stand at an unspeakable distance from every kind of speculation. They have no problems

of thought set before them, no pre-conceived aims of meditation. An ethical urge compels them to think, a compulsion of conscience makes them speak; the irresistible truth overwhelms them. That gives them their simplicity; all that is deliberate and is the product of reflection is foreign to them. They do not speak themselves, it is some higher, paramount power within them which speaks. "I am pained at my very heart, my heart is disquieted within me; I cannot hold my peace." "O Lord, thou hast deceived me, and I was deceived: thou art stronger than I, and hast prevailed. . . . And if I say, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name, then there is in my heart as it were a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I am weary with forbearing, and I cannot contain myself." They speak because they must speak, and therefore they make us so convinced that we hear in them the voice of conscience, the language of religious feeling. What they say was given them to say by God.

Hence they are so assured of their prophetic gift: "The lion hath roared, who will not fear? The Lord God hath spoken, who can but prophesy?" "And the Lord took me from following the flock, and the Lord said unto me, Go, prophesy unto my people Israel." "But I truly am full of power by the spirit of the Lord, and full of judgment, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin." All that they speak God spoke unto them and in them; it is spontaneous, inner realization, profoundest religious experience. What it comprises is not to be dissected or analysed. If we were able to define it, it would not be what it is: prophetic revelation. Genius, the divine, are undefinable.

It is this conviction of revelation, this mysteriousness, this "daimonic" power, which constitute the spiritual peculiarity of the prophets' work and life. The prophets are not merely teachers of their people, men who in times of moral obliquity inculcated what was right and good: they are not merely teachers of ideas to which they or others happened to attain. They are more; they are aware that God speaks, they are "full of power by the spirit of the Lord". However clear and precise what they utter may be, — so clear that it has remained clear for all time, — the source out of which it emerged sprang from that unfathomable



depth of the soul where the Divine Spirit embraces the human. Their mind did not seek after truth, but the truth took possession of them; their message was not inferred or puzzled out, but stood out openly to them, having been opened for them. But, nevertheless, their human personality remained, their individuality with its wishing and willing, its seeking and fearing, its fighting and resisting. They did not feel merely passive, as a later faith supposed, the mere objects of a grace which descended upon them; their individuality, their sense of freedom, seeks out a way of its own. Both are combined in them, namely, the Divine mystery or secret which enters into them, and the human thinking and yearning which emerge from them. Clearly they experience the one as well as the other. They are aware of the miraculous, that power which is beyond them; the future rises before them, and they behold and hear things which stand outside the range of the human eye, the human ear. But they realize also their own individual souls, they have their part in the decision which is demanded of them, their conscience wrestles with itself; before them lie the paths between which they must choose. Thus the two experiences go on within them simultaneously; they reveal themselves to God, and God reveals Himself to them; God orders and compels them to speak, and they speak and strive with God. They are the men of God.

So nothing evaporates in generalization, everything about them is *real*, *personal* and *definite*, often personal to the point of severity, and definite to the point of harshness. This is as true of their demands as of their words. It is noticeable how the prophets, in wrestling with themselves, wrestle for the right words, how they fight with the language in order that the inexpressible may be expressed; the richness of meaning often seems to crush them. But they never try to *explain* any particular phrase or to justify it, there is never an inclination to analyse and to put things in the abstract. For it is the word of God that speaks out of them and reveals itself to them; thinking to them has come to mean listening and vision, and the symbol with its metaphor provides them with the final answer.

Hence their indifference towards the traditional words, even when these signify the holiest things, and their open disgust for

mere phrases which purport, with their grandiloquence, to make everything clear. "I am no prophet", cries Amos to those who would forsooth understand him by saying simply that he is a prophet. With what wrath does Jeremiah turn against the terms "the Temple of the Lord", "the ark of the covenant", and "the exodus from Egypt", all of them designations which, from the lips of the people, sound to him as word-idols, almost more evil and more dangerous than idols of wood and stone. The prophets swear by no conception and are satisfied with none, they despise all phrases and every declamation, in short everything which purports to be finished and complete. Even their own words are to them but words which they happen to employ. That is why they themselves count so much more than their speeches; greater than their word is the personality which stands behind the word, the spirit which seeks expression by the word. They fought with God, and God fought with them. It is the revelation of the God who stands above all forms and formulae, and not statements of their thoughts, of which their tongues would tell.

For the prophets the knowledge of God is thus neither the last link in a chain of thoughts, nor the outcome of intellectual speculation. Since they feel what God is to them they carry Him within them. Therefore He is so completely assured to them, so unqualifiedly certain. To prove the existence of God would have been to them a sign of utter unbelief, a manifestation of their having lost, and their having been forsaken by, God. The necessity to explain the existence of God and His divine rule is as remote from them as the necessity to prove their own life-consciousness by means of logical reasoning. To them religion is the meaning, the innermost nucleus, of their own existence, not something external or supervened, not something which has been acquired or learned. It is life from the life of the soul, and as such stands beyond all controversy. Again and again this is stressed, that religion lives in the heart, and is the innermost nature of man. And this conviction became part of the being and soul of the succeeding generations. In several of the psalms, in the Book of Job, in the Book of Kohelet, and in many a passage of the Talmud, are to be found words of defiance, which, in their outspoken character, cannot be surpassed even by atheism; the contra-

dictions and incomprehensibilities, the enigmas and disharmonies of human destiny, are there revealed in all their stinging, painful pungency. But to use these very words against God and the moral order of the world, or against religion, would be as impossible for the men who uttered them as to commit suicide.

Since belief was thus the life of the soul, since it thus carried within itself certainty and justification, and was independent of all outside support, it was able to strike root deep down in the human heart. The prophets seek to express only what they themselves have experienced, what God means to them at all times, and are indeed able to do so on account of the invincible certainty of intuition. They possess the power to set this, their assuredness of the soul, against all apparent facts, and against all that claims to be real, and to pronounce their "and yet" in the mighty paradox of their irrefutable faith. And they taught men to bear witness to this "and yet" at the cost of life itself. The prophets rely upon themselves; they neither chaffer nor compromise, they yield nothing, and allow nothing to be subtracted from the fulness of their demand. "They shall return unto thee, but thou shalt not return unto them." Thus they gave to religion its triumphant independence and the stamp of revelation.

This free conviction of inner union with God constitutes the basis of that ethical character which gives to the words of the prophets their peculiar nature, and which has always remained of determining importance for Judaism. Not what God is in Himself, but what He means *to man*, what He means *to the world*, is their concern. They do not attempt to analyse the nature of God any more than the nature of man. Human free-will, responsibility and conscience are to them, as principles of their spiritual experience and of their ethical demand, as much matters of course as the existence and sanctity of God. They do not seek to solve the problems of the universe, but simply to proclaim the relationship of God to the world, the Divine beneficence and the Divine will. They do not seek to answer any psychological problems of the soul, but simply to speak of the relationship of the soul to God, of the dignity, the duty, and the hope of man.

To know the nature of God means to the prophets to know that He is just and incorruptible, that He is merciful, gracious and

long-suffering, that He tries the hearts of men, that He created them in order that they should be good. The knowledge of God teaches us what man should be; the Divine reveals that which is human. The ways of the Lord are the ways which man should follow — “and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment”. And hence to understand man means to comprehend that which God gives to him and commands him; it means to comprehend that he was created to be just and good, holy as the Lord his God. The revelation of God and the revelation of human morality are thus brought closely together. It is not a revelation of the nature of God which is given to the prophet and through him, but the revelation of God’s will and His rule. It is by reason of that which we learn about God that we learn to understand ourselves and to become true men. “He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good.” That which God speaks to us is the good which, for the sake of human life, is demanded of us. The path of righteousness alone leads on to God. The greater our desire to fulfil our true nature, the nearer we come to Him, the nearer He is to us. To seek God, that is to strive after good; to find God, that is to do good. Do God’s bidding, and then you will know who He is. Such is the comprehension of God as experienced and taught by the prophets, the way which leads to God. “In all thy ways acknowledge Him.” “Therefore turn thou to thy God: keep mercy and judgment, and wait on thy God continually.” “Seek the *Lord*, and ye shall live; . . . seek *good*, and not evil, that ye may live; and so the Lord, the God of hosts, shall be with you, as ye have said.”

The sense in which the prophets use the expression “to know God” is specially characteristic of their way of thinking. All which this conception connotes for them is, and remains for them, within the limits of the human, — man’s life, his being, and his growth. The knowledge of God is not a knowledge of something which, apart and detached, lies beyond the world of here and now; rather is it something which remains within the sphere of ethical religion; as the knowledge of God’s commandment and the will to fulfil it, it is rooted in man. It is the synonym for the morality which can live in every soul as its own law. It is not bestowed as a gift of miraculous grace upon a selected group, but it proceeds

from man's freedom; his knowledge of God is as freely within his power as his love of God. Both, the knowledge of God and the love of Him, stand side by side, upon the same foundation, and are used in the same sense. Just as it is said, "love the Lord thy God", so is it also a spiritual demand that men should know Him. So deep-rooted is this knowledge in the idea of ethical freedom, that man, by virtue of his knowledge of God, stands up over against God. The ethical conscience, this innermost knowledge, can make demands of God, the demands of the man who knows God. "Yet would I argue with thee about thy judgments." "Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?"

To know God and to do right, the word of God and moral goodness, have thus become synonymous in prophetic speech; each has become a commandment. "For I desire mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings." "There is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land." "For they proceed from evil to evil, and they know not me, saith the Lord." "Did not thy father eat and drink and do judgment and justice, and then it was well with him? He judged the cause of the poor and needy; then it was well with him. Was not this *to know me*? saith the Lord." "Thus saith the Lord, let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord who exercise lovingkindness, judgment and righteousness in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord." "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." Thus it was preached to the people: the basis of understanding is the right deed, and with the deed is revealed knowledge; right doing leads to right thinking. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge." "And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding."

This has always been the beginning and the end, the doctrine and the goal, of the Jewish religion; it has become the secure possession of the religious community. Wise is he who walks in the ways of the Lord, doing what is right; such has been the con-

viction of Judaism throughout the centuries, and it was also expressed in its mysticism. *Religion* and *life* are thus intimately bound up together — religion, which has to be proved through life, and life, which has to be fulfilled through religion. The latter is brought down upon earth, and the former is exalted to the sphere of the Divine. And so it is that the ground for a conflict betwixt belief and deed is removed: there is no piety but that which has proven itself in the conduct of life, no conduct of life is valid but that in which religion finds its realization.

So all false phantasticism and hocus pocus are kept at a distance. The *thoughts* of God are unfathomable, they are exalted as high above the thoughts of men as are the heavens above the earth. But the *commandments* of God are “not hidden from thee, neither are they far off”. They are bidden you this very day, and they are straight and pure; there exists a covenant between man and God. The course of life is clearly defined for the pious man, since he knows what he *should* do; the future speaks to him, because he understands the duty which the coming day may impose upon him. Knowing what God means to him and what God bids him do, he looks confidently towards the future which will constitute his life. Illuminated by the light of religion, his way lies clear before him. For it is the way he *must* go, the way which was promised to him. “But they who seek the Lord understand all things.” Thus there is only *one* reason and only one approach to God: that which is won by doing right.

It is worthy of note how decisively the special and peculiar character of religion has thus been preserved. Not a *new philosophic conception of the world*, but a *new religious life* is to be created and carried through. It is not one of the least essential or important points in the creative work of the prophets that religion should have been conceived so purely, that it has been kept free from all foreign matter, from any admixture of natural philosophy or of gnosticism. The prophets gave to religion its autonomy. It might almost be said that it is not so much monotheism which constitutes the world-historic importance of the Hebrew Bible, but rather its *purely religious foundation*. Anything which might tend to become a mere question of metaphysics, and which might threaten to lead on to the hazy uncertainty of speculation, was

firmly placed upon the solid ground of ethical feeling and religious life. Theoretic questions concerning the beyond are transformed into the certainties of feeling and into claims of conscience. The universe and its phenomena are neither conceptually explained, nor mystically interpreted, but exclusively adjudged in terms of religion. In the place of constructive conceptions and poetical myths stand the moral command and pious trust. These are the limitations of the prophet, but they are limitations which reveal the master.

It is the essential virtue of Israelite thought, of which the prophets were born, and which they in their turn formed and directed, that all pondering and seeking are directed towards man. It is man who stimulates the thinking. The question: what does man need, what is his pain, this question which is wrung from the listening and crying human heart, has seized and constrained Jewish genius; only because of it did this genius demand and receive the revelation of God. That is why it is impelled by the strong feeling of inner compulsion, by that prophetic spirit which is not to be found outside Judaism. The Israelite genius did not move from nature to man, as later in the case of the Greeks, but it moved from man to nature. Even nature itself talks to the Israelite of man; it shares, either happily or mournfully, in nearness to God and in human sin, in man's joys and in his sorrows; man's yearnings are revealed in nature. The riddles of the world are heard also in nature, but they are only the undertone to the riddles in the life of man. In man the world manifests itself, everything has its origin in his soul, and everything leads back to his soul. The world is the world of God, and God is the God of man. Thus they are felt and comprehended, and in feeling so Jewish genius is unique.

How God created heaven and earth is to the prophet a question of minor importance. It is significant to know only that the world, which is filled with His glory, bears witness, throughout its length and breadth, to the Almighty God who is full of love. The fact that the story of the creation is so isolated in the books of the Hebrew Bible speaks for itself, while the seven times repeated phrase, "and God saw that it was good", in the story of creation, shows unmistakeably what sort of knowledge is regarded as most im-

portant. The vision of a life after death, that world of phantasy, does not appeal to the prophet. If his thoughts should wander into the region from which there is no return, he abstains from conceptions which try to visualize or to describe it. The commandment of man, the command, "thus shalt thou live", eclipses all questions of the beyond.

This inner connection with real life had also the effect of obviating the opposite danger, the danger of conceptual petrification. For the representation of the unity of God, and of His attributes, can fall a prey to this very danger by reducing the Divine to a mere collective conception of ideal qualities. Instead of a truly religious relation to God one then gets a scientific investigation of the Divine perfection, and by speculation about religion, or even by faith in such speculation, religion is lost. The prophets keep firmly to this: they bear witness only to that to which their souls bear witness, to that which God means to them in their innermost life. They teach that which they themselves have experienced: of the God whom man should seek, and who allows Himself to be found by him.

This is illustrated by the manner in which the unity of God is mentioned. It is foreign to the prophets to deduce logically, from the interconnectedness and cohesion of nature, the existence of a first cause. But the Divine unity becomes unshakeably certain to them by the inward experience that there is only *one* justice, only *one* holiness. God is the one God because He is the Holy One. The conviction of the unity of God thus has its roots in the religious consciousness. And therefore it is something religious which emerges from it. God is one, and therefore "thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might". The Lord is "God in the heaven above, and upon the earth beneath: there is none else. Thou shalt keep therefore His statutes and His commandments".

The attributes of God are realized in the same way. They are not built up conceptually, but brought to man for the purpose of definite moral demands and of ever new strengthening of trust. So with the omnipotence of God: God is the Lord of the whole universe; *therefore* we are to love the stranger. He made heaven and earth; and therefore he "keepeth truth for ever, he executeth



judgment for the oppressed, and giveth food to the hungry". He lends breath to every living thing; therefore Israel, who recognized and knows Him, is chosen "for a covenant of the peoples, for a light of the Gentiles, to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house". In the same way, eternity is based upon the ground of religion; it is brought into the life of mankind. God lives from eternity to eternity; therefore He is "our dwelling place in all generations". God was and will be, and so He "will give strength unto His people; the Lord will bless His people with peace". God remains for ever, and therefore hope in His justice must never waver; He is "a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble". In the same way, all the Divine attributes are linked up with the life of the soul and the commandments. However much some of these attributes lent themselves to the temptation of subtle speculation, their religious character was always maintained. With definite certainty it was also preserved in the Oral Law by making all problems about the attributes lead up to ethical commands. "You say, God is merciful and gracious; well, then, do you too be merciful, do good deeds unselfishly and to all. You say, God is just, then be you also just. You say: God is full of lovingkindness in everything He does; so be you also full of lovingkindness."

On this clear path Judaism has remained. Just as there was no ground for a conflict between belief and life, so there was none for a conflict between faith and knowledge. As it does not exist in the former instance because religion has to be realized through life, it cannot exist in the latter case because religion is not to be proved by means of knowledge. Religion can never become a branch of a definite body of knowledge, and therefore can never be called in question by any definite body of knowledge. Since it rests upon no axiom, it can be undermined by none. Its freedom remains secured, and it is unassailable by all the movements of scientific knowledge. It is significant that the astronomical structure of the world, as now accepted, has been received by Judaism without protest, even without any feeling of inconsistency. The old systems began to crumble, and their end was watched without concern; for none of this was Judaism responsible. *Religion*

*remained religion*; hence its independence. This autonomy is the heritage of the prophets.

All the features of the Jewish religion show it to be a creation of the prophets, for it is not conceptions and their meaning, but man and his life and his conscience, which constitute its character. The religious documents of the Hebrew Bible, however much the author retires behind his work, are not really books, but confessions, testimonies of individual religious seeking, revelations of very definite personalities. A religious style was created by them, and here, if anywhere, it can be said that the style is the man. Who the man may be is frequently but little regarded, but wherever distinct personality can make itself felt, it does so. Hence it is that the Hebrew Bible is so fragmentary, so undogmatic and unsystematic; no chain of conclusions, no proof of the result connects the single links, there are no finished formulae to do the linking; it is all as unsystematic as *man himself*. Hence it is also so incomplete, so full of questions, and leaves so much over; many things are merely indicated, others only incidentally expressed, and this or that seems to be entirely absent. It is as incomplete as *man himself* rightly is. Hence it contains an unanalysable residue of its own, a something which is not to be worked out, or squeezed into sentences, which can be grasped and felt only with holy awe, like some music which has never fallen on human ear. It is a residue which goes beyond all knowledge and cleverness, in which every true man finds his innermost personality. Hence the lasting freshness of the Hebrew Bible, its youthfulness, something which will neither fade nor perish, something which, ever new, is at all times a new experience. For "mankind moves on, but man remains the same".

The religion of the Bible is therefore, so to say, more than the Bible itself, and Judaism more than its religious documents. The words of the Hebrew Bible, and like them the words of the Oral Law, sound like the voices of a gigantic fugue, or, to employ an expression of Goethe regarding his life's work, they are "fragments of a great confession". But beneath it all lies the whole fugue, the whole confession: religion. He who wishes to hear and is able to hear, may hear it. Merely to select sentences and to put them together does not in itself prove an understanding of the

Bible. It is not words which have to be explained, or sentences to be expounded, but it is men who have to be understood. Many commentaries on the Bible, not to mention the interpretations of the Oral Law, remain so singularly remote from the Bible, because they regard it as though it were simply a collection of writings for grammatical and philological exercises. The approach to the finest things in the Bible does not lie through a sharp intellect or through wide reading, or through formulae, but only through reverence and love.

In a certain respect, both the Hebrew Bible and Judaism make a poor show as regards words; they are frequently, as the Scripture says of Moses, "slow of speech and of a slow tongue". Their fullest meaning is not obtained by what they say. What is best in Judaism, better far even than its teachings, is to be found in actual living men. Wherever there prevails that modern tendency to ascertain the value of a religion with the slate pencil, there it is scarcely possible to do justice to Judaism and to the Hebrew Bible. The Hebrew Bible does not speak three dozen times about the Father in heaven, and Judaism does not talk one hundred times over about the goodness and the love of God. They carry more in their hearts than on their lips, and so they get scant mercy from the masters of numbers, the arithmeticians of religion.

Never has Judaism found complete self-expression in mere words. There have been periods — and these not the worst — when some religious, and often some quite unlikely, meaning was found in every word of the Scriptures, but to know and be at home with the mere words did not guarantee a possession of anything religious. It is in a *detachment* from the mere word, in a spiritual apprehension, that the renaissance, to which Judaism so constantly awoke, is deeply rooted. Conception, word, and phrase can be handed down with pedantic precision, but with the personal and the human there must always be some inner contact and connection. The personal must recreate itself in the soul, as through a spiritual rebirth. Every system of thought is intolerant, and breeds intolerance, since it fosters self-righteousness and self-satisfaction — it is significant that the most ruthless of inquisitors have grown out of the circle of systematists. A system fixes its focus of vision at a certain definite range. It cuts itself

off from all else as a distinct domain whose borders inevitably become in themselves a limitation. And thus it prevents the growth of fresh formations of its own truth. The prophetic word, on the other hand, as a living and personal confession of faith, which cannot be circumscribed by demarcation, possesses breadth and boundlessness. It has a freedom, the extent of which cannot be anticipated, which carries within itself the seed of revival and development, and so becomes inevitably, again and again, incorporated into present and actual life.

Every true *personality* becomes embodied in *history*. With no single prophet is the fabric of the Jewish religion completed, any more than it began with any single one; Jewish prophecy points back into the past, and on into the future. That Israel possesses, not "*the prophet*", but "*the prophets*", is significant in itself. That is where it differs essentially from other religions, which regard as the beginning and the end of their prophetic period the *one* Gotama Buddha, the *one* Zoroaster, the *one* Mohammed; their most important development ends at their beginning. In Israel the master is followed by a train of masters, the great one by a line of his peers. None of them gives forth the whole, none of them represents the whole. The richness of the religion is not contained in a single one, or even in several of them. To completeness and perfection only a system, at most, can lay claim, but never a human being. The whole content of Judaism truly lies in its unended and unending history.

But the incomparable importance of the prophets, indeed of almost every one of them, nevertheless remains. They are not indeed mediators of salvation, but they *are* mediators of religious truth, vehicles of revelation. In religion they represent the classical era which can and should bear fruit again and again. As has already been said, their achievements have not, or ever can, become obsolete, or just part of the past. We too look up to them. Since their day every religious experience has been a *revival* of what those men experienced. They discovered, and whoever comes after them can only rediscover. From the very moment when a genius makes his appearance there can almost only be disciples and adapters. The old discovery can be rediscovered in new forms, but the living element in them is the old spirit, and

what appears to be new only goes to prove the triumphant vitality of that first achievement.

Whether the prophets consciously meant to convey by their speeches all that we find, or can, or ought to, find in them is a question of minor importance. It matters not what its author intended the word to mean at the moment; what really matters is what actually lies in it. The strength of genius lies in its creative power; almost unconsciously the genius creates truths which go further than he himself meant. His effect is always greater than his intention, and what he actually says is always more than he really intends to say. That which is to him a limited metaphor may become for us an eternal symbol, something of the richest meaning to us, but which for him had only one meaning. That distinguishes creative genius from ingathering talent. Here again is revealed the truth that the prophets are more than their words. This, and many another statement here, may, perhaps, appear to be apologetic. But how can one speak of certain things without being apologetic? Indeed, to *understand* certain things *means* to *admire* them.

What was contained in the religion of the prophets has remained the property of Judaism; therein lie the determining elements of its being. Characteristic boundary lines can be drawn. Judaism is a religion which seeks verification in *life* and finds its answers in the union of life with God. In religion all men are to be on an equal footing; religion is to be a common possession for all. Everybody is to be pious; not the saint, but "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" is the ideal. In the depths of the soul of the prophet there dwells indeed his special secret, and he may and indeed must apprehend what to everybody else remains a closed door, or wholly non-existent. But this his possession, and his right to it, is to him but a duty, a gift, and a commandment to proclaim what, prior to all others, he has heard, to announce what, prior to all others, he has seen. But it was never considered to be a special piety which could be claimed by him alone, which was reserved for him exclusively. He has a mission, for which God created and chose him, but not a special rung of religion, upon which he may stand. He is the prophet, but not the saint. And even he has not looked upon the face of God. In relation, or as opposed, to God, all men, in the last resort, are equal. However

different the degree of knowledge, however different the intuitions which go beyond knowledge, the divine unfathomableness and infinitude confront all, revealing themselves to none. But religion, the gift and capacity of piety, may be the possession of all. Everybody can draw near to his God, and a way to God proceeds from every soul.

Hence there cannot arise in Judaism a distinction between consecrated and unconsecrated persons, initiated and uninitiated, possessors and partakers of religion; moreover, the absence of any kind of sacrament has served to prevent that. Elsewhere, e. g. in Christianity, this has taken place frequently, and in a variety of ways. There an exclusive religion has made its appearance, a special and peculiar type of holiness, — not merely and purely a revealed proclamation of the Eternal — on the basis of rapturous and exuberant experiences, special manifestations of divine grace and extraordinary unions with God. Thus the religious community became at last always divided into two classes and grades. Above those who may inhabit the ordinary territory of work-a-day piety live the élite, in a special world of their own, enjoying true intercourse with God; they are the lords of religion. In one form or another, therefore, there come into existence consecrated priest-hoods, religious orders, monasticism, exalted above all others, distinguished by the privilege of “religious life”. This is what happened in Buddhism, in the esoteric cults of the Greek world, in Catholicism, and in a certain sense in Pietism, and even from time to time in Judaism ways were opened, within the province of its old and new mysticism, which were, and which are, apt to lead to similar results. The tendency is most clearly exemplified in Buddhism, where the Sangha, or community, consists exclusively of the monks, whilst the whole body of believers constitutes their appendage. And wherever a special accumulation of grace on earth creates saints, these “saints” also enter into the heights of heaven; monasticism and the veneration of saints belong to one another.

Many a figure of the *vita religiosa*, in Catholicism especially, as well as in the Buddhist world, is looked upon with justified pride. In the pure air around the heights of the soul, as in the devout flame in its depths, wondrous forms of piety have made

their appearance, like the white lily and the fragrant rose. In a Gotama Buddha on the one hand, and in a St. Francis and a Catherine of Siena on the other, the life of faith possesses personalities in whom an ideal seems to have found its full realization. Who would dispense with them in the history of religion? But this ideal cannot be *applied to all men*; it declines to become a common one. It offers only religious supermen, so that humanity appears to exist simply in order to produce from time to time saints who stand before it as miracles, attracting to themselves veneration. Mankind remains forgotten in the background. And what lived within those saints, as the poetry of belief and longing, became ossified into an ecclesiastical institution; it became an order, an authorized administration of granted gifts of grace. In place of the ideal there is substituted the character of a particular class, the membership of a certain circle. The ideal may be acquired by means of a consecration, or of a sacrament. And so the inevitable outcome is that the true and whole religion becomes the possession of an exclusive group, and can only be bestowed indirectly and to a certain extent upon all others as fragments of grace and gifts of faith. Religion therefore splits up into a twofold religion, and so very soon there enter into it a twofold truth, a twofold justice, and a twofold piety. An essential feature of the prophetic teachings is therewith destroyed. The religion of the prophets by its very nature seeks to be the religion for all; it imposes upon everybody the same demand; it offers to everybody the same promise. The religious personality which it seeks to inform is to be the personality of every man.

In contrast with that exclusive piety, it inevitably happens that every worldly task and every human activity in every-day life, become in themselves *not* holy, and hence negligible and indifferent, are regarded as of small account, or are finally cast away as something directly unholy. The pure spirituality and delicacy of feeling, in which that isolated religion would exist, abandons or throws aside all that is sensuous. The world of natural and physical things is considered as an evil or a deception, either condemned as the domain of a power inimical to God, or completely negated as a sinful delusion. So the separation of life from religion becomes complete. God and world stand in oppo-

sition to each other; only he who forsakes the world can approach near to Him. In Buddhism this proposition too is carried through to its logical conclusion; its ancient formula of confession says that "the monk who tills the soil, or has it tilled, must do penance".

In life there come periods of fatigue, periods when thought is dissolved by mood, when the mind is dominated by a desire to turn from the world and its dust and its stones. Not only in romantic minds is there awakened an immense longing for a life, wholly averted from the every-day life, detached from all its driving needs and desires, devoted entirely to pious meditation, to the praying and the dreaming of the soul. In those moments especially when a man feels an inner loneliness, a loneliness amidst his fellow men, he would fain belong to himself alone, so that solitude might surround even his eyes and ears. This longing appertains no less truly to the unbeliever than to the believer. Many a sorrow can be soothed, when the troubles of the world are suffered to disappear, and its cares to die away. And such a procedure can well be a means of healing the soul — but is it therefore to be declared the method of true life, or even the aim of earthly existence? It is suited to temporary pain — but is it therefore to be prescribed as the content of all our days?

The history of every religion tells of the path to solitude; they who rediscovered themselves and their God have there found their souls. Not least does Judaism know of the wilderness in which the prophets realized their vocation, and the seers learned to see, of the tranquil valleys and the mountain tops, where the voice of God has been heard by the ear of man. Judaism too has known the solitude of the house of learning, the silent atmosphere of books. In the world of Judaism paths leading away from man have been sought again and again. Indeed only in its most barren times was such seeking unknown. Faith in that which abides, strength after days of weakness, and courage after hours of fear, knowledge of God and confidence, were always rediscovered there. Much indeed was attained or regained there, — but not that other, that separated piety, that sundered religion. However much men succeeded in turning away from the world and contradicting it in order to become assured of God, they always remained conscious of the fact that the approach to God which opens itself up in every



soul, leads first of all to the human beings by their side. This is in itself sufficient to explain why the mere anxiety about his own soul, whereby the seeker is ever retreating and drawing back into himself, receives no encouragement in Judaism. In Judaism *solitude is only for a period of life, often a very necessary period, but it never was life itself.*

Judaism, too, tells also how yearning for the joys of ecstatic and rapturous absorption in God, longing for the surging mystery of God, have taken hold of the soul; in times of persecution more particularly we hear of these things. For it was in those times that mysticism grew up; lifting men above the parched roads of existence with their narrowness and fears, it was able to give a miraculous stillness of distance and a heaven-sent sabbatical world. Then too men banded themselves together in something closely resembling religious orders: these began with the groups of the Essenes, and come down to the holy-day assemblies at the centres of Chassidism. But even here, where many a foreign element was allowed to creep in, Jewish mysticism did not lead to the piety of the recluse or the hermit, or to an empty absorption in God. That which was revealed, that which dominated, was for the mystics also the Divine will which demands the allegiance of every individual; here too the demand for the "kingdom of priests" was retained. This unity or inseparability of the content of religion is essential to Judaism. Its religious demand and its religious ideal hold good for everyone; every person is called, and is indeed bound, to appropriate the whole of the religion as his own.

There have always been varieties of piety in Judaism. There have been emotional enthusiasts and scholastic philosophers, solemn and melancholic souls and joyous philanthropists, thinkers, and men of oldfashioned and traditional piety. But to fix definite grades in religion, to separate adults from minors, actors from spectators, and full priestly piety from less, but adequate, popular piety, has always been foreign to Judaism. It does not even draw a distinction between priest and layman. The community comprises only teachers and learners. He whose conduct is good, and who possesses the necessary knowledge, is chosen to be a spiritual leader, but without thereby enjoying any special sanctity or belonging to any special religious grade.

There was once a priesthood, but it was only obtained by inheritance. It was a priesthood by birth, which entitled a man to the service of the altar, and carried with it a certain rank. And yet it was vested with no special proximity to God, nor did it claim any. The priests were never the possessors or administrators of gifts of grace, or the retailers of salvation. The very language jealously guarded against this, for whenever it mentions the part played by the cult in the process of atonement, it prefers to speak of the impersonal altar, rather than of the priest. And even this priesthood of birth the course of historical events brought to an end. During one of the most important periods of Judaism, many of the people styled themselves "the separated", "the Pharisees". But that, according to classical interpretation, meant only "separated from sin and heathen abominations". They felt that they were morally separated, and indeed wished to be so separated and different, and without the *will* to be different there can be no determined resolve to be good. Some men who obeyed the ceremonial statutes of the Law with scrupulous precision called themselves "Associates" (*Chaberim*), members of a kind of fellowship, and they did desire thereby to exalt themselves above the multitude, and even to stand in contrast to it; but where the real domain of religion began, there was even for them only one valid principle: "all Israelites are brethren". The Rabbis of the Talmud, and also the martyrs and the mystics among them, were usually men of ordinary civic avocations, and, it might even be said, of civic or bourgeois religion. So too the most eminent and most influential theologians of the Middle Ages were not theologians by rank or profession. There did indeed exist in ancient times the custom of laying on of hands, the *Semicha*, whereby the judge and the teacher of the Law was entrusted with his office; but this ceremony was no transmission and bestowal of a gift of grace, but only a symbol that a certain authority was being handed over. But this custom too, when it assumed a sacramental character outside Judaism, ceased to exist within Judaism, and the attempt to re-introduce it more than a thousand years later met only with a short and transitory success. The unity of the religious community in Judaism has never been called in question. It has always remained a basic principle that the religion as a whole

should be the property of all, and that each one should be called to it in person.

This universality is also revealed in a very characteristic conception. Essential religion is understood by Judaism to consist in a doctrine of purposive action, or, to employ an ancient biblical term, in Torah. This word developed into a principle. For it implies at once that religion constitutes the same task for one and all, that it may be acquired and possessed by all, that it is open to all, and is destined for all. A Torah can only be one, that of the whole people, the way in which all should walk. Here there is revealed a feature similar to that which appeared also in the Socratic philosophy of Greece. It too aspired to become a Torah, a Torah of philosophy, which declared that virtue could be learnt, and that it is a command which all can comprehend. In exactly the same way the Torah in Judaism is the demand that the teaching of the prophets should become the possession of all, and that the spirit and the mind of each person are capable of receiving it. Hence it stands as the universal and human conception in contrast to that other particularist and separatist attitude which, outside Judaism, became in some quarters predominant, namely, that a spiritual illumination, brought about by the miracle of faith, and given by divine grace, is the essential element of religion, and therefore to be fully attained only by a chosen few.

It might be thought that on account of this attitude of Judaism the ideal tends to become vulgarized, and that its height may be impaired by the fact that it seeks its realization in the compass of an entire religious community. And it might also be supposed that the religious experience, by means of which the individual seeks to find his own special approach to God, is bereft of much of its importance. Can there be room for it? But there need be no fear lest this individual and personal element should be lacking in Judaism; indeed, it has never been absent. The determining factor, the fundamental feeling, which religion seeks to supply is this, that man should feel what each individual means to God, and what God means to each individual, that he should be near to God, and united with Him. It is in this general human element, in this covenant between every man and God, that the religiousness of Judaism finds its root. It is from this soil, this consciousness

of the divine nearness, which is granted to every human being, and not from some position of privilege in relation to God, given by grace, that the individual element, the religious experience, grows up. Of paramount importance is the fact that in Judaism nothing can be part of the ideal which cannot be turned into a command of something to be done or refrained from. And there is no true moral command which cannot and ought not to include all men. This excellence outweighs those drawbacks of a far-flung ideal which seem to threaten its sublimity. "*Ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation*", is a phrase which has acquired in Judaism the character of a religious confession. Nobody is given or granted what does not apply to everybody, and that which is and has to be demanded of one is demanded of all.

In Christianity the Reformation attempted a return in this direction. And it is surely an acknowledgment of the old Jewish teaching if the universal priesthood of believers was proclaimed, thus restoring the inner unity of the community. But even here, where distinct pieties for priest and people were no longer permitted to exist, a concomitance arose of authorized officials of religion, on the one hand, and of mere receivers upon the other. For wherever a religion claims to bestow miraculous gifts of grace, there will always be this inevitable division. Such a division occurred at a prominent point of doctrine. For it was due to the Reformation that the "Word of God" was declared to be the means of salvation; and in the word the supernatural Divine power becomes manifest, and through grace is brought to man; through it faith and trust are bestowed. Thus the word is not Torah, but something sacramental. It stands beside the sacraments, and is, like them, not something which has to be fulfilled by, but something which is given to, the believer. Upon its being offered and preached to the community in the right way, everything depends: the true illumination and faith, the inner experience of "justification" and salvation. Correct theology becomes the condition of salvation. Hence it demands its officers and administrators. A special group of owners and curators of faith are thus created in the community; theologians and laymen, minors and men of age, are opposed to one another. And so the religion itself acquires a doctrinal, rationalistic character; theology sits at its centre.

Judaism too did not escape a danger of this kind. Whenever fresh knowledge becomes available to a religion, it easily happens that the intellectual element in it becomes overvalued. One of the best men that Judaism ever possessed, one who endeavoured to point out new approaches to the understanding of the Scriptures, Hillel, uttered the saying: No ignorant person can be pious. But this dictum did not become authoritative, although it had emanated from Hillel. We can trace how the protest against it became sharper and sharper till at last the protest prevailed. The final answer to Hillel's dictum is, "It is the deed which is decisive". "He whose wisdom is greater than his deeds is like a tree whose branches are many but whose roots are few; the wind comes and uproots it, and overturns it." When in the Middle Ages the teachings of Aristotle entered into the circle of Jewish thought, and a new theology arose under its influence, that danger loomed up once more. Moreover, the Aristotelian philosophy lays explicit stress on the value of knowledge; its ideal, which found its way into Jewish religious philosophy, is "*theoria*", the pure contemplation of the sage. The opposition which now arose was levelled against the authority of Maimonides, just as it had been previously directed against the authority of Hillel. One of the teachers of Judaism at that time (Chesdai Kreskas) emphasized the attack thus: "That opinion was hatched by foreign philosophers, and unfortunately Jewish thinkers also allowed themselves to be won over to it, without considering seriously that they were thereby destroying the essential *peculiarity of religion*, and disturbing its boundaries — quite apart from the fact that such teaching is in itself utterly false." In opposition to that Aristotelian school of thought mysticism too won its way into Judaism. And when the codification of religious law led to the view that learning and knowledge were the main and determining things, mysticism espoused the cause of the purely religious element in piety. Thus it is due in no small measure to mysticism that Jewish piety came once more into its original rights. Life is more than doctrine or learning; that, in spite of everything, remained firmly established in Judaism.

In Protestantism the doctrinal element kept its place. Seeing that comprehension of the Word became here the first and last

consideration, the separation in the religious community was inevitable. The class of laity was created. Beside the chosen and official few to whom the Word and the teaching have been vouchsafed, as witnessed to by the Holy Spirit, stand the many to whom they present it in some form or other, opening up to them thereby faith and piety. It therefore became necessary to define authoritatively the full meaning of the Word in the form of a creed or *confession of faith*, and this became a sort of sacrament or manifestation of grace uniting the uninitiated with the initiated. Here, again, a part of the ideal is withheld from the larger section of the community. That a religious and ethical *deed* is to be done ought to, and can be, demanded of each individual, since it is a matter of the will. But to understand a *doctrine* cannot be demanded of, and can hardly be promised to, everyone, for it is a matter of intellect or of grace.

The unity of religion as well as that of the religious community must be safeguarded in Protestantism by means of the external unity of the creed or "confession". It is round the "Confession of Faith" that religious battles are fought; adolescents are introduced to it in the catechism at their religious instruction in school, and it provides the test for full membership in the Church. Thus does religion become a special "denomination", circumscribed by theologians. "Orthodoxy" becomes the most important "good work", which is only too easily fulfilled. The primary religious opposition of the God-fearing and the godless is superseded by the theological opposition of orthodox and unorthodox, of those who are strong and those who are weak in their belief in the Confession of Faith. This division penetrates even into the domain of ethics. Just as Catholicism teaches a special lay morality which is proper and adequate for the wider circle of the community, so here too worldly occupations are allowed to accept a lower, yet adequate, measure of morality; a lay morality has here too been built up. Many important features of Protestantism betray the fact that it was theologians who first set it on its way.

Theological propositions are necessarily connected with, and conditioned by, the knowledge of any particular epoch; this holds good for Protestantism as well as for Catholicism. Hence when these propositions are brought into the forefront of religion, they

last longer than the epoch in which they were first enunciated. When that occurs, the conflict between belief and knowledge becomes unavoidable, and it becomes a conflict between the faith of the church and the faith of its followers. Moreover, dogma needs a supporting power, which guarantees its acknowledged and authoritative character, and this power, which the Catholic church commands in the form of a powerful organization, is wanting in Protestantism. For that reason Protestantism has nearly always sought, even more than Catholicism, to rest upon the power of the state. Often, expressly or implicitly, it became a state church, towards which its historical conditions tended to lead it, so that its confession of faith acquired a political protective covering. In the Protestant state and in state Protestantism there was lost much of that purely religious character without which religion is deprived of its indispensable independence and its unassailable right of existence. Religion may be the concern of a people, but it must never become a concern of the state, if it desires to retain its claim to being true *religion*. In such a case conflict betwixt belief and life becomes inevitable, and, just like that conflict between belief and knowledge and the division within the religious community, this conflict too has in fact constantly arisen out of the position which the Word and the Confession of Faith have acquired in Protestantism.

Moreover, a Confession of Faith, if it is of such importance, must be publicly *pronounced* as evidence of membership of the particular denomination. Therein lies the danger of verbal deliverances about religion being dragged into religion. Sometimes the so-called "act of bearing witness" takes place; it is peculiar to Protestantism; it cannot be regarded as being the same as that old path which led to martyrdom, but it is rather a safe and deep-toned utterance in solemn assurance, with which the flowing explanations of the creed are given forth in full security to the world. It is a new form of witnessing to the faith. It is easily and pleasantly done. Besides a sincere, healthy and popular piety which exists in the Lutheran church, one finds there not infrequently a kind of verbal religion, the dominance of the pious phrase, which expresses itself either in bombastic declamation with an unctious tone of its own, with its special vocabulary o

devoutness, or in a virtuosity which seeks to conceal indefinite and indefinable thoughts behind high-flown phrases. And to the artificial elaboration of a religious phraseology, which is always equal to the occasion, there is easily joined the self-righteousness of the privileged. In the religious *deed* lies an ideal which can never be completely realized; but men can easily persuade themselves that they possess the Word, and, still more, the Confession of Faith, in their entirety. The artists in religious phraseology become quickly transformed into the assured hereditary tenants of religion.

The inner experience too, which should correspond to the Word, in order to give it its most precious content, the "inward feeling" so strongly emphasized in Protestantism, thus becomes not infrequently a mere word. In order to confess their faith, men make known certain conditions and experiences of the soul. How easily this leads to false introspection, a luxuriating in the open exhibition of their feelings, is shown by many incidents in the history of Lutheranism. In addition to true trust in God and sincere belief, we have often love of admiration, a coquetry of piety. Pharisaism, in the sense in which ordinary language, though with historical inexactitude, employs the term to describe so well certain religious manifestations, is sometimes specifically Protestant.

It is, moreover, somewhat dangerous to attribute to religious experience so *decisive* and authoritative a religious value. Religion cannot be built upon it any more than it can be built upon prayer; it is a means by which a man may become convinced of religion, but it is not religion itself. Religious life will never be able to do without this experience; for in it religion raises itself, not, perhaps, to its summit, but, at any rate, to a sacred height. Yet it is something which belongs to the spirit of the hour, something occasional. Man lives neither for nor on his states of feeling. These, it is true, are not incompatible with the deeds with which they may be contrasted. But "to dream piously is easier than to act rightly". Our moods or states of feeling may seduce us into supposing that they in themselves constitute complete religion, and that, in moments of exaltation, religion finds its ultimate aim, its realization.



In Judaism religion must not be merely *experienced*, but *lived*; it must not be a mere experience of life, even of the most profound kind, but its actual fulfilment. This may seem nothing but a difference in words, but it is really a distinction within the soul. It is the right deed alone which always places man in the presence of God, and it can be demanded at every hour of every human being. It alone effects that inner unity of man by which he knows himself to be united with God, and so also that other unity by which men are made aware of the permanent connection between their lives and those of all other men. If the ideal embraces everybody, and imposes its command upon all, then men become a community of God, and are brought together into a community of life. The pious deed gives to the Confession of Faith its sustaining foundation. It provides the secure religious foundation, common and equal to all, for the love of God and the trust in God, for faith and promise. Only in that which we do are we able to believe; even faith has its roots in the will. He who has not become sure of God through good deeds will never experience lastingly the being of God through any inner experience. It is in the deed that God reveals himself in life; the deed is the determining factor for man, who, in his very existence, seeks after God. As the phrase in Exodus says, with a meaning which goes even beyond its intention, "We will do and we will hear". And as the Talmud later expresses it, "Take the *commandments* of God to your heart, for then you will know God, and you will have discovered His ways". Knowledge too proceeds from the will — from the will for the good. In the same sense, a man of much later times, Hebbel, wrote in his autobiography, "There is no path to God but that which lies through human *deeds*".

Judaism too has its Word, but it is one word only — "to do". "The word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it." Here the deed becomes the proof of conviction. Judaism too has its doctrine, but it is a doctrine to be fulfilled, a doctrine which determines the path of life. It must be explored in order to be put everywhere into practice. Hence there can be no doctrine in Judaism except that which is the expression of the divine *command*. "The secret things belong to the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto

us and our children for ever that we may *do* all the words of this law." Religiousness is the decisive factor and the creative element in the religion of Judaism.

This feature has been peculiar to the religion of Israel from the very beginning, and it has ever remained its possession till now. The increase in the number of the so-called ceremonial laws, which serve for the preservation of the religious community, is due to the place which is assigned to the *deed* in Judaism. The deed has, it is true, often sunk to a mere tradition. But what is that compared with the religious value which is contained in the essential importance of moral *doing*, or compared with the religious distinctiveness which is thereby produced? This distinctiveness became so deeply rooted in the character of Judaism that even all its religious philosophy directs itself towards doing and action. The extent to which Philo was of set purpose a moralist has often been pointed out by experts. The same applies to the leading thinkers of the Middle Ages, especially to Maimonides. And when Spinoza terms his philosophy "ethica", taking ethics to be its ultimate objective, this seems almost like a heritage of the Jewish spirit. Most striking is the fact that Jewish mysticism clearly betrays the same tendency. In mysticism too the meaning of life is to be shown in the *deed*; it is the divine *will* which reveals itself to man, and the powers which work in the world are moral powers. So does Jewish mysticism too preserve Jewish characteristics.

Wherever Judaism became conscious of its difference from paganism, it felt it, and indeed emphasized it, as a *difference in deed and life*, as a moral difference. There was never any hesitation in granting some mitigations to proselytes, who "came to take refuge under the wings of the God of Israel", in regard to the ceremonial and ritual elements of the Law. But to make even the slightest remission in the moral laws was totally inadmissible. For the proselyte too the moral law remained unchanged and unabridged; here all compromise ceased. The Middle Ages were very prone to interpret the words of the Scriptures, and to expound them, allegorically; the ordinary meaning of the word was considered to be inadequate and poor. But when it came to the Commandments, an end was put to all allegory and interpretation; here all twisting and hair-splitting ceased. And when hopes for the future of

mankind, and of religion, were spoken of, the ideal was always an ideal of right action, of moral perfection, of the realization of the *good*. The Messianic age will have arrived when all men shun evil and do good. In another connection it will be shown that the highest and the most important mission to be fulfilled by Judaism lies in the good deed, in this mission of life, the "sanctification of the Name".

Faith and trust have lost nothing by this; for the deed has given faith and hope. History too led to the same goal; it was a history for the sake of God; it enjoined, and constrained to, sorrows and troubles; such a history almost compelled men to pray and to trust. Even if Jewish piety had not included the certainty of God as an inseparable portion of itself, the very history of Judaism would again and again have brought this certainty into men's minds, and lifted up their souls to the Eternal. This prophetic assuredness, which is convinced that God has spoken, that He commands and promises, has remained, with all its pathos, in the possession of Judaism. This strength of faith over against, and in contrast to, everything that man regards as experience and fact, has continually given afresh to Jewish history and to the Jews the will to endure, the determination to persist: the will has created the life. If the deed provided the *content of life*, it was faith which gave to life its *power*. The mystery of life, that road from God to man, and the clarity of life, that road from man to God, tended to converge.

## REVELATION AND WORLD RELIGION

The ethical character, the fundamental importance of moral action, existed in the religion of Israel from its very beginning. However one may fix the date of its birth, and whatever view one may take concerning its progress, one thing remains certain, that from the very beginning of the real, the prophetic, religion of Israel, its cardinal factor was the moral law. Judaism is not merely ethical, but *ethics constitutes its principle, its essence*. Monotheism came into being as a result of the realisation of the absolute character of the moral law; the moral consciousness teaches about

God. Where this principle takes its rise, the religion of Israel begins; its life has thereafter shaped this fundamental idea.

Its decided ethical character thus distinguishes the religion of Israel, the new way which was found. And this character is *completely new*, not merely the modified continuation of an older one. Ethical monotheism was not the outcome of an already existing development, but a conscious abandonment of it. For there never has been any development of a *nature religion*, (that is to say, a religion in which the forces of nature are worshipped, and in which the gods are conceived as embodiments of nature) into an *ethical religion* in which God is something other than natural, in which He is the Holy One, the originator of morality, who is worshipped in the right deed alone. This is one of the most indubitable results of the history of religions. It is quite possible for nature religions to acquire ethical elements and to enter into relationship with morality. They can connect themselves with it by moralizing their gods, transforming them into guardians of the civic community. But a nature religion has never developed into a purely ethical religion of which morality is the real content. This transition is always effected by a break, a revolution. It is the work of intervening personalities, of founders of religion, and thus it means a discovery, and constitutes a fact which carries its reason within itself. The ethical monotheism of Israel is not the product of a natural development, but is a *religion* that has been *founded*. The "One God" of Israel is not the *last word* in an *old* way of thinking which has reached this particular stage, but rather the *first word* of a *new* way of thinking, a new logic, the moral logic. In so far as this form of religion is a creation, an entirely new and fruitful principle, we are entitled to call it historically — disregarding first of all every supernatural interpretation — a *revelation*, marking a new sunrise in the history of the world.

We may say this the more emphatically because it has remained an absolutely *unique* phenomenon. There is in the history of mankind nothing like it, nothing like the origin of monotheism as it was born in Israel out of the moral consciousness and out of the moral imperative. Whether, therefore, and in what form, it might have come into existence on different soil and in different circumstances is an idle question. Historically it is a fact that it

was given to mankind through Israel and through Israel alone. It is not necessary to create and to construct it, for it stands as a real phenomenon, as a revelation before our eyes.

In the fact that the religion of Israel is characterized as a revelation there is implied a *valuation*. If the essential factor of religion lies in man's attitude towards the world — and this ancient view of the Prophets is today once more acknowledged — then there are but *two distinct forms* of religion, the religion of Israel and that of Buddha. The former bids us give a moral affirmation of this relation with the world by will and deed, and it declares the world to be the field of life's tasks; the latter takes as its aim the denial of this relation; man is to devote himself to himself in self-meditation and without volition. The one is the expression of the command to work and to create, the other of the need for rest. The one leads to the desire to work for the acknowledgment of God, to establish the kingdom of God in which all men may be included, whilst the other leads to the desire to sink into the One, into nothingness, there to find deliverance and salvation for the ego. The one calls for ascent, development, the long march towards the future, whilst the other preaches return, cessation, futureless existence in silence. The one seeks to reconcile the world with God, the other tries only to redeem from the world. The one demands creation, new men and a new world, the other "extinction", departure from humanity, departure from the world. The one is the religion of altruism, since it declares *that* man to be striving towards perfection who has found his way to God in seeking his brethren, who serves God by showing justice and love towards men. The other is the religion of egoism, since it attributes perfection to the man who retreats from mankind in order to remain within himself, and to discover the only true approach to himself.

Between these two forms of religion the choice must be made; the one or the other must be religious revelation. The history of all religions besides these two consists in a greater tendency towards the one or towards the other; in the mixture which the great strata of life become, the one or the other shows more prominently. One can, at the very outset, discard religion altogether, and confine oneself to objective observation and intellectual exploration

of the cosmos, according to the teaching of some of the Greeks. But he who would not live without religion, who seeks in religion a definitely religious relation with a real world, will be compelled to regard the religion of Israel as a revelation. This means also that it is the *classical* manifestation of religion, and that, in spite of all the developments of its path, yet from the start it was not simply a beginning, but an ideal. For every true idea is a whole, it represents a goal, which each period views in some fresh light.

Only in Israel did an ethical monotheism exist, and wherever else it is found later on, it has been derived directly or indirectly from Israel. The existence of this form of religion was conditioned by the existence of the people of Israel, and so Israel became one of the nations that have a mission to fulfil. That is what is called the *election* of Israel. Hence this word expresses primarily only an historical fact, it defines an essential specific peculiarity which has here come to the front. It indicates the fact that there was assigned to this people a peculiar position in the world, that it achieved something which distinguished it from all the other nations.

But this statement expresses at the same time a verdict. It declares that the *difference* is *justified*, that the *peculiarity* is *valuable*, and that the existing cleft rests on a clear and permanent possession. The difference is acknowledged as something which lends meaning to the life of this people, and in which it finds itself, as a mutual relationship between God and itself, as that *covenant* for which the Lord lifted it out of the darkness of its inarticulate past, and in which alone it discovered its straight path and the promise of its future, as that covenant which continues from generation to generation that which that existence grants and demands. Thereby life sends down its roots into the depths where the human is borne by the Divine, and above itself it discerns its height where the Divine endows the human with its confidence; thus the right to be different finds its basis and its certainty. A need of the soul finds herein its answer. Everybody who is in possession of a truth experiences in it a peculiar possession which has been bestowed upon him, that which separates him from other men. He who is called is always the chosen one, one who has heard that word of God which indicates to him his peculiar

way. Revelation and election are conceptions which imply one another. He who assigns to a religion a classical significance acknowledges also the special position of its champions, which they, and only they, possess.

The historical fact has been grasped more and more firmly by the people to which it revealed its position and the importance of its existence. It became a possession of the soul, a knowledge of itself, an imperious self-realization. Men became conscious of possessing religion. The courage of being oneself, the power of possessing something which was one's own, was thus created; the idea of religious possession developed strength, the consciousness of truth; the ideal feeling of personality became intensified. The people were enabled to discern the message of the Lord again and again, the belief in themselves was granted to them. With this certainty, religion became a lasting truth to its adherents, a truth for the community, so that men felt it within them as the religion of their ancestors and of their descendants. Whenever this strong feeling was lacking, constancy of faith and its certainty suffered. Spiritual things become possessions only when we realize how we and those who are near us find in them our special distinctive gift and our own peculiarity. It was by means of the idea of election that the community first became conscious of itself.

In an oft-quoted phrase handed down in the Sayings of the Fathers, Akiba praises the great divine love, in that God made man in His own image; and he praises it as an even greater love, as God's special love, that He imbued man with the *consciousness of this likeness to God*. The same may be said in regard to the Israelite religion. It penetrated as a living force into the souls of men, it was victorious from the very moment when the perception of its distinctiveness, when the understanding of the limit which separated it from all other religions, became clearer. It was only through the consciousness of election that religious energy was awakened. History provides the clear proof; the Prophets who grasped most firmly the heart of the Israelite religion also emphasized the election of Israel most decisively. And so it always was thereafter; the idea of election always found its most powerful expression in the men and in the times which preserved most faithfully the essence of Judaism.

The idea of election is therefore nothing but the living certainty in which the religious community realises that it possesses the knowledge of truth, the Divine revelation. With it was given inward independence, the capacity of acting in conscious freedom. In the consciousness of this unique vital possession, of the covenant with God, the community gained the power to be different, the will to be distinctive and to remain indifferent to numbers and to success. This resolute following of its own conscience and its own heart, this courage to believe in them rather than in the many outside, produced spiritual independence. By this means alone was the community able to confront the whole world, as it had to in many hard times, to be *that* community which accepted no compromise. History has demanded again and again that it should be inconspicuous among the many, and small as against the mighty, commanding that it should remain the few and the weak. It was repeatedly the duty of its existence to be oppressed and humiliated, and yet to cherish within itself the conviction that it was living a sublime, yea, the sublimest, history. But for the idea of election, this would have been impossible.

The most striking, if exaggerated, expression of this feeling of possessing the truth, with which Judaism was filled, is to be found in the conviction that Biblical wisdom is contained in Greek philosophy, and Greek truth in the Holy Scriptures. It was a naive belief, and many a historian, pluming himself on his own objectivity, has found it easy to look down on it with indignation or mockery. But "the sensible man laughs at all things, the man of reason at nothing". Nothing is easier than to stand upon the platform of modern historical knowledge, and to criticize more or less benevolently the simplicity which counted the Greek philosophers among the disciples of the Prophets. But in reality it is touching to witness how men, full of thought and insight, were so deeply convinced of the truth contained in their own religion as to be unable to conceive of any domain of knowledge outside the revelation of God to the Prophets, and were driven to recognize their religion even in philosophy. These men abandoned therewith a great part of the firm and purely religious ground upon which the religion of the Prophets took its stand, and upon which they remained free and safe in regard to every *conflict* betwixt faith and



knowledge, as well as in regard to all *confusion* of faith and knowledge. But yet there was something great in this mighty religious self-assuredness, which took such complete possession of these men's souls, that all truth became to them spirit of the spirit of their religion.

No man can bear witness to his faith unless he be so wholly inspired by the religious idea, and give himself up to it so completely as to remain indifferent to historical success and so-called historical results. He alone who dares to oppose and to disregard them possesses that unflinching courage of conviction which does not shrink even from death. Historical research does not make the martyr. What makes the martyr is partly a lack of feeling for history. Every genius is unhistorical, and so indeed is every truth, since it bids men forsake the beaten track and reject the common line of development. Nothing is more "unhistorical" than to die for a truth; for men sacrifice themselves only for the sake of a truth that wants to be different from mere history. Renegades and their like have always been able to boast of their understanding of history. The old indictments against Judaism are, above all, the so-called results of the history of religion. Only a living consciousness of truth can be equal to the task of remaining sure of oneself and constant against these results. Errors and misdirections, half truths and *détours*, often have lengthy histories, but truth as such is an end in itself, and therefore unhistorical. He who has the inner conviction of possessing the truth, who lives for the ideal, and especially the religious ideal, may, and indeed must, remain indifferent towards the successes of history which confront him, even though they may tell of victories enduring for centuries.

The men who revered the Greek philosophers as disciples of the Prophets were lacking in true historical insight. But this deficiency was only the shadow of light, the fault of their virtue; it was a one-sidedness, but a one-sidedness of the excellence which characterized them, their strong consciousness of possessing the truth. They lived even in this world for the sake of eternity, and so they regarded the course of days and events *sub specie aeternitatis*. They looked on the past, as of Israel so of all other nations, with the eyes of backward-gazing prophets. We would not miss this magnificent religious pragmatism, even for the sake of a better

understanding of history. That unparalleled spiritual fervour, of which the profound religious significance lay in the idea that heathen thought meant a pursuit of the Divine, gave to this consciousness of possessing the truth its own unique stamp. And this fervour too has more weight than many a true historical judgment.

Throughout the whole of the Middle Ages Jews still thought it possible to discover in true philosophy the real meaning of the Hebrew Bible. But, Plato and Aristotle notwithstanding, and indeed on account of Plato and Aristotle, the idea of Israel's election became more and more firmly grasped. Judaism emerged with renewed strength from the great effort to come to terms with Greek-Arabic philosophy and science. Just because the men of those times were so completely and so clearly convinced of their religion, they were able to meet the progress of thought so readily and frankly. Both, *respect for knowledge and certainty of religious conviction*, were thus preserved for their own generation as well as for the future.

Nowadays we are equipped with a clearer historical perception of the nature of the Jewish religion and of the exact meaning of the words of the Bible than was possible in those days. Our judgment is also more accurate as regards the distinction between faith and knowledge. But this better understanding of religion can only become effective if we have that strong consciousness of truth which the men of those times possessed. So alone will the religion to which we belong by birth become our own religion, which for us means *religion*. By this means alone will it acquire the correct relationship with the knowledge of our own day. Where this relationship is lacking, the reason may frequently be found in the absence of a sound scientific standpoint, but even more frequently in the absence of a secure religious basis. The man who with his whole soul believes the God of Israel to be the true God will be entirely convinced that essential religion, its true being, can be shaken by no results of historical research or scientific discovery, by no philological or archaeological finds.

A certain exclusiveness is, as a matter of course, bound up with the idea of election. For to acknowledge a truth is to ward off error; to go one's own way entails the rejection of the way of others. All moral progress, each phase of life, began in this

fashion. It was in the *contrast* with the peoples round about that Israel comprehended its belief with ever increasing clearness, grasped it with ever greater firmness; in opposition to them it discovered itself. It was because it was strong enough to be alone, and opposed to all the others, that it was able to become the creator of its personal life, and to become the "one peculiar people". "Lo, the people that dwells alone, and is not reckoned among the nations."

Hence the religion of Israel had always to begin by emphasizing its peculiarity; prophetic preaching had to demand separation from the life of the neighbouring peoples, and the oral tradition had to erect "the fence around the Torah". Exclusiveness, as has been well said, is the "negative side of the duty to confess one's faith". It may be added that it is also the necessary consequence of the command, "Thou shalt have no other gods besides me". It corresponds to it just in the same way as the confession of faith corresponds to the first sentence of the Ten Commandments, and so it is entirely wanting in polytheism. It means to the community what the holiness which separates, the command to choose God only, means to the individual; it means for both that religious truthfulness which neither bows nor submits to any strange god. Wherever this ideal separateness is lacking, it is speedily followed by syncretism, by the intrusion of spiritual influences from lower planes, as history proves by many instances.

It is in accordance with the genius of the religion of Israel that this particularism soon acquired its decided *ethical expression*; every fact which is rightly understood constitutes a task, every reality of human life is a shaping force. An enjoined national exclusiveness was transformed into a demand of *ethical exclusiveness*, and the uniqueness of historic position was conceived as uniqueness of religious duties. The feeling of dignity awoke, and the covenant between the people and God was placed on the footing of a commandment. The aristocracy of conscience arose, that nobility which imposes itself upon everybody. Israel is chosen if it chooses itself. "The Lord shall establish thee for an holy people unto himself, as he has sworn unto thee, if thou shalt keep the commandments of the Lord thy God, and walk in his ways." "Ye shall be holy unto me: for I the Lord am holy, and

have separated you from the peoples, that ye should be mine." "Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all peoples; for all the earth is mine." "As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord: my spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever." Election becomes thus a higher duty to which the people, and the individual included in it, have to adhere faithfully. To this there corresponds the stricter measure which therefore has to be applied to Israel. "You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will visit upon you all your iniquities." "For, lo, I begin to work evil on the city which is called by my name."

This idea pervades all the prophetic orations: Israel is chosen by God; therefore God is its judge. Israel is appointed by God to practise righteousness, and only if it does so can it and may it remain the chosen people; sin separates it from God, and forfeits its value. Its existence can be only a religious one, and it will be as it should be before God, or not at all. Out of this conviction there sprang the idea of the *world-historic vocation* of Israel, of its mission, and of its responsibility before God and to man. Election is conceived as a prophetic calling of the whole people. It becomes the belief in a mission which goes beyond Israel; Israel is chosen for the sake of others. All Israel is the messenger of the Lord, the Messiah, the servant of God, who is to guard religion for all lands, and to radiate light to all nations. "I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the nations; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house." That has become a classic idea, and later times preserved that which is essential and forceful in it. It could only have arisen from the consciousness of election. Only out of this belief in itself could this belief in responsibility come to Israel, this challenging confidence of existence for the sake of the world. Only a people which felt its own individuality in its soul could feel what its importance was to be for others.

The idea of election thus receives as its necessary correlative the *idea of humanity*, of a humanity destined to obtain true religion. If the duty is imposed upon a nation to proclaim to the whole world the One God, who is the Lord of the whole world, the stress laid on this duty towards all mankind clearly implies something in common with all, as children of God, as belonging to God. If Israel, as the bearer of religion, is the "firstborn son of God", this means that all nations are children of God, that they ought to be united with Israel in love for Him and in obedience to His commands. The tie of a common religious destiny unites all men. The religious conception of "all nations" is formed, and becomes a recurring phrase of the Prophets. The religious idea of "humanity", religious universalism, becomes in this way a fundamental and essential part of religion; it becomes the *principle of a historical religious task*. As a religion which sees in the future of mankind the end of its own road, the religion of Israel becomes a world religion. It could indeed be called *the world religion par excellence*, in so far as all religions which find their conscious end in universalism sprang from Judaism and, because they did so, set this goal before themselves.

This universalist feature, this character of a world religion, never had in the religion of Israel anything of the accidental or merely additional. It was impossible for it to be so, since this feature was already embodied in its doctrine of God, in its ethical monotheism. It is implied in the very conception of the ethical, for the ethical claims to be universal law; its demands are directed alike to all men, and are to be realized by all men and by mankind. A faith which regards the moral act as the essential mark of piety is a universalist one, and its ideas and promises are those of a world religion. Universalism is likewise contained in the conception of monotheism: to the *One God* can correspond only the *one religion*, to which all are called, and which cannot therefore find its historical fulfilment until such time as all men are united in it. Its preaching becomes an announcement of the "day to come", in which its history is to find completion and realization. Its decisive word is for the future, the age that is foreseen, whereby what is furthest off becomes near, and what is veiled most assured, whereby the horizon of man extends to the whole world

that embraces all. It is the same with the biblical idea of the one secret, of the Eternal who bears everything, with the idea of creation. The creation of the world is here the creation of mankind, with the one world one mankind came into being. The one God who called the universe into existence called all to take part in its one life from the very beginning. "Who has wrought and done it, calling the generations from the beginning? I the Lord, the first, and with the last, I am he." The universe is the great conception of the beginning, and becomes the great idea of the future.

It is only natural that in this picture of the future there were also painted national conceptions and expectations. The greatest duty always carries with it at the same time the greatest promise. Should not that power which made special demands of Israel grant it also special promise? Besides, the existence of monotheism was bound up with the continued existence of the community of Israel; Israel's future was the future of religion. And, contrariwise, in the destiny of religion, and therewith in the destiny of the world, was involved at the same time the peculiar and true destiny of Israel. It is because religion is to the Prophets the vital thing, the hinge on which history turns, that the destiny of Israel stands necessarily for them at the centre of the history of the world. They could not have been human beings, with blood running in their veins, if they had not waited and longed for the coming of those promised future days as being above all else days of recognition, days of prosperity and happiness for their people. They speak to their people, because they speak to them of mankind; therefore they had also to speak to them about themselves.

The pronouncements of the Prophets and of those who came after them have thus a two-fold aspect. The hope for mankind is the hope for Israel. The word of God to mankind is identical with the word of God to His people. The way towards the goal set by God for the centuries begins with the election of Israel. Though the Messianic age is prepared and dawns for the whole world, it is yet part of the life of the nation, in and by which the Messianic religion was created. If salvation is destined for all mankind, it will be none other than that which came out of Zion, and became a blessing for Zion. World religion is embedded in the religion of

Judaism. The stronger the stress placed upon universalism, the greater the emphasis which could be, and had to be, laid upon the special position of Israel. Those very prophets, who taught the one so explicitly, adhered just as decisively to the other. And whenever, in Talmudic times and later, the idea of the great task of Israel concerning the whole world came clearly into prominence, the consciousness of Israel's personal possession of the truth, and of its unique relationship towards religion, was also brought out with assurance and distinctness.

The historical manifestation became in this way a vivid conception, and the separateness of Israel became a consciousness of service for the sake of the future of mankind. As already indicated, it is remarkably in accord with the most essential feature of the Jewish religion, that here again the idea of commandment and of duty becomes of paramount importance. A peculiar or special calling is demanded, but no exclusiveness of salvation is proclaimed. Judaism was prevented from falling into the religious narrowness of the conception of a church which claims a monopoly of salvation. Where not belief, but deed, leads to God, where the community offers to its children an ideal and a task as the spiritual symbols of membership, there a place in the covenant of belief cannot of itself guarantee the salvation of the soul. And, on the other hand, it is just as impossible that the loss of salvation should merely depend upon the chance that a human being belongs to a different circle of belief by the accident of birth. Throughout the Bible there is audible, faintly but distinctly, the doctrine that all men seek God: "from the rising of the sun even unto the going down thereof the Lord's name is praised". Even the heathens try to be pious; they too find some way of return from their sins, and can attain Divine forgiveness. The contrast between God-fearing and godless gradually becomes more and more decisive; it pushes all others into the background. And "God-fearing", in the emphasized meaning of the word, is applied to every person who believes in the one God and does right. Words of quality, such as "chassid", saintly, or "zaddik", righteous, which were intended to describe *the best among the Jews*, begin to be also applied to the heathen, till at last the moral equality of the rights of all men finds its clear and determined expression in

the sentence, which has become classical: "The pious of all nations will have a share in the life to come." Compare this conception with Dante's description of the place of damnation, the doom of even the best of the heathen, as well as with those innumerable ghastly pictures, the outflow of church teaching both before and after Dante, and the contrast in all its acuteness will readily be realized.

Judaism speaks about the good *man*; the words "a good Jew" are foreign both to the Bible and to the Oral Law. It is *man* who is set before God. This idea is grasped with firm assurance, and it is constantly stressed in ever new connections. "You have read in the Pentateuch that Moses spoke to the Children of Israel thus, 'Ye shall keep, therefore, my statutes and my judgments: which if a *man* do, he shall live in them: I am the Lord'. And you know also that David said, 'Happy, O Lord, is the man who walks in thy law'. But he did not say, 'Happy are the Priests, the Levites, and the Israelites'. Did the prophet say, 'Open ye the gates that the Priests, the Levites and the Israelites may enter in?' Did he not rather say, 'Open ye the gates, that a righteous nation which keepeth truth may enter in'? And you have also heard, 'This is the gate of the Lord; the righteous shall enter therein'; or did you hear it spoken thus: 'This is the gate of the Lord; the Priests, the Levites and the Israelites shall enter it'? Do you sing, 'Do good, O Lord, unto the Priests, the Levites and the Israelites'? In the pilgrim song do you not rather say: 'Do good, O Lord, unto those that be good, and to them who are upright in heart'. And this too you hear in your Psalm: 'Rejoice in the Lord, O ye *righteous*: for praise is comely for the *upright*'. But the Psalmist does not say to you, 'Rejoice in the Lord, ye Priests, ye Levites, and ye Israelites'. Therefore I say to you, 'A heathen who does right is worth as much as a High Priest in Israel'." Earlier than the covenant which God made with the patriarchs, and with their descendants through them, stands the covenant which God made through *Noah* with all mankind. If they who accepted the service of the One God in order to be His witness before the whole world are the *Children of Israel*, those heathen who refrain from inhuman and immoral acts are the *Children of Noah*; they too are the chosen children of God.



A variety of factors have combined to make it possible for ignorance, and easy for ill-will, to misunderstand and to deny the universal character of Judaism. To begin with, it is so-called national particularism in which many have thought to find a deficiency of the Jewish religion, when in reality this particularism has been a necessary foundation of its strength of existence. Only in the kingdom of angels can a distilled and pure idea exist by itself, but with us humans on earth, where every soul has a body and an individuality of its own, a religious faith can exist only in some concrete form. It must have its secure roots in the specific character of a people or of a community; it must win its life, its definite individual form, its manifestation, through the lives and the spiritual individualities of those who profess it. All human ideals are conditioned by an actual, historical life; they are interwoven and interlocked with it. Had monotheism not become the religion of Israel, had it not gained its firm security by becoming a national possession, or had not the national consciousness of being the chosen people given to it the spiritual strength which carried it forward, it might, perhaps, have become the secret, mysterious doctrine of an esoteric sect, and in some old writing a record might have been left of it. But it would never have been able to resist the changes of time, and so to become the religion of all time. This national particularism, which is always a favourite reproach against Judaism, is nothing but that intense and vivid individuality, that solid selfhood, which alone safeguards permanence. And in the religious sphere there is no life or individuality which is not also nationally conditioned, and also to that extent limited.

With the wide dispersion of Israel this national limitation became divided. Despite all fundamental religious unity, Alexandrian Judaism was different from Palestinian, and this in turn differed from the Judaism of Babylonia. And throughout the Middle Ages a contrast continues between the Spanish-Portuguese Jews, or Sephardim, and the German Jews, or Ashkenazim, a contrast which consisted not merely in the difference between their fortunes, but, perhaps on account of those different fortunes, no less also in their modes of thinking and in their spiritual characteristics. These differences have always been noticed and

felt. There has scarcely been any period when Judaism constituted an entirely homogeneous whole. The Jews of various countries have always shown unmistakeable peculiarities in their religious conceptions and in their whole make-up. Even the Jews of the north of France, for example, are not the same as those of the south of France, and the Jews in northern Germany differ from those in southern Germany. There is between them the same sort of difference as exists between north Frenchmen and south Frenchmen, between north Germans and south Germans. All religions have national limitations of this kind; this is true of Christianity, of Buddhism and of Islam. German, Spanish and Italian Catholicism, the Russian and the Armenian Church, English, Swiss, and northern Protestantism, Turkish and Indian Mohammedanism, Tibetan and Japanese Buddhism — and who can count the special forms of all religions? — they are one and all nationally conditioned and nationally limited.

If the Prophets spoke primarily, and often exclusively, of Israel, it was assuredly a wise limitation. They knew and felt that true religion had first to be securely established in Israel, before it could be promulgated and presented to the world. In Israel first was morality to be concretely realized; and in Israel what is truly and purely human was first to find expression. Even where the teaching was intended for the whole world, it had first to be addressed to Israel. The force of its effectiveness required this limitation. Without this personal intimacy, which speaks to those to whom the heart primarily urges a man to address himself, much of this effectiveness would have been lost. Just as he who prays with his whole heart implores *his* God, though knowing all the time that He is the One God, the God of all men, so the Prophets, especially when they were most deeply moved, could only speak about their own kinsfolk, about the people of Israel, however well they knew that their teaching was intended for all men. In the same way they spoke of the God of Israel though they desired to proclaim to all nations the commandment of the Lord of the world. It was their care for their people and their love for it which found expression in these phrases, and at the same time their conviction of the fact that only from their own people could arise a Prophet who understood the purpose and

goal of mankind. Their people provided them with a secure place from which to observe and to understand mankind, just as mankind in its turn showed them the true place of their own people. The conception of their own people, and the conception of their responsibility to the world at large, strengthened one another, and so the understanding of the particular was not inconsistent with the understanding of the general. Just as fidelity to the family and the love of mankind do not exclude one another, so also do universalism and limitation in teaching and proclamation not conflict one with the other.

It proves the power of the words of Jesus, and not the narrowness of his outlook, if he limits his teaching to Israel, and enjoins the same limitation upon his disciples. But it is a good thing that his exhortation is not contained in the Old Testament, and still less in the Talmud, for it would have found small grace in the eyes of those austere Protestants who investigate the Old Testament and the New, and who, without compassion, would have dubbed it as yet another manifestation of the narrow, national religion of the Jews. The Prophets speak of the world and its salvation, but they speak to Israel: it is only their later and colourless imitators who constantly summon all mankind to listen and admire.

In order to secure its ground, and to gain spiritually a place in the world, Judaism was compelled to maintain itself by fighting, and we therefore frequently meet, especially in the older religious literature, words of battle and of strife. In the Prophets and in the Psalms, and later too, we find many a sentence which reveals a passionate desire for, and a confident expectation of, a Divine judgment upon the heathen, sentences which, though spoken in holy wrath, offend our ears and our feelings. But though they are no longer *our* words or the expression of *our* hopes, we are nevertheless able to appreciate and to understand them. It should not, moreover, be forgotten that this wrath is directed, not only against the godless gentiles, but also, and with as much violence, against the sinners in Israel. It is not so much hatred of the nations around, as *hatred of sin*, bursting forth with all its weight of moral indignation. If their moral convictions so demanded, the men of God even took the part of the enemies of Israel. So little were they

entangled or prejudiced by nationality, that they saw in foreign nations the instrument of God's punishment of their own people. So filled were they with the belief in the immovable and inviolable moral law, that to them the final answer, the true end to evil, could only have come, when iniquity, wherever it might lift its defiant head, was followed by revenging disaster. In those hard times, when the idea of an unlimited, world-reigning righteousness had to fight its way through to universal acknowledgment, that was a matter of life and death for the conviction of the victory of the good. The passionate yearning and hoping which, with all the power of faith, held fast to the conception of an incorruptible eternal Judge, which clung with every fibre of the soul to the just God, could not always look on with patience and calm at arrogant wickedness both within and without the land, and refrain from longing to witness the judgment day of the Lord. God alone remains patient, for He is eternal. So too we sometimes find in the Book of Job, which displays the desperate struggle of mortal man, who has no time to wait, as he battles in the anguish of his heart for the righteous God, words which border on the blasphemous. But in this blasphemy there is more fear of God than in much of your gentle and pious humility.

Whoever considers himself secure in his virtue, and looks down with pious eyes upon that "thirst for revenge", ready with some sharp criticising word, has surely little experience of the torture of a struggling soul, whose moral faith feels itself crushed beneath the heavy pressure of fact. It is in such anguish as this, in such martyrdom of conscience, that man's earnest faith in righteousness has most to endure. The suffering which he experiences in his personal life, painful though it may be, this personal martyrdom, is easier to bear, easier to accept with quiet forgiveness. We must ourselves have experienced, or at least have sympathized with those who have experienced, the cry: "Wherefore should the heathen say, where is their God?" We must have experienced it as our own sorrow, or at least have felt with those who experienced it: "They slay the widow and the stranger, and they murder the fatherless, and they say, The Lord does not see, neither does the God of Jacob regard it", in order to understand the bitter outbursts of the suffering soul, to comprehend the

prayer: "O Lord God, to whom vengeance belongs, shew thyself. Lift up thyself, thou judge of the earth: render a reward to the proud." When Christianity went forth among nations, it already possessed in Israel's Psalms and Prophetic books a great treasure of consolation and assurance with which to meet the testing temptations of the world's powers. Israel's religion had to fight for the attainment of this treasure, and many a quivering word bears witness to the wounds received in the struggle.

Moreover, it must not be forgotten that the final word is one of love. After all the storms and struggles, we hear in ever fresh tones the gentle ending: "Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him." "Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil." "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass. And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday." "But judgment shall return unto righteousness; and all the upright in heart shall follow it." And hope for the heathen rings forth with power: "Let the peoples praise thee, O God; let all the peoples praise thee. O let the nations be glad and sing for joy: for thou shalt judge the peoples righteously, and govern the nations upon earth." The religious conception "all nations", created by the Prophets, becomes a prayer of hope for the whole world: "Declare among the peoples his doings." "Declare his glory among the nations, his wonders among all peoples." Out of all this inner trouble and affliction emerges again and again this undying yearning for the future. And no feature is more characteristic of the soul of men and of peoples than this longing and picturing, as they gaze out into the distance and the future.

This universal character of the Jewish religion was not fully developed from the beginning, though from the beginning it formed part of its essential nature. Like so many other features of Judaism, it developed gradually into clear decisiveness. The Bible shows this quite plainly; it shows not only the fruit, but also the deep-rooted tree which bore the fruit; it shows the development. Above all it was necessary to win the conception of the world from the point of view of history, before it became possible to find an intelligible expression of the idea that the Jewish religion was intended to become the religion of the whole world.

In order to delineate universalism, it was necessary that the historic horizon should be expanded. Those very men, who expounded distinctly the idea of a universal religion, conceived previously the idea of *universal history*, which to them represented the rule of the divine command in the world, and the realization of a sublime and eternal plan. That conception of the world which goes beyond distinctions of nation and land, which seemed to wrest from other nations their religious foundations, and to dethrone their gods, made religious truth acquire in Israel its all comprehensive breadth, and now first revealed fully the thoughts and ways of God. Among other nations this gazing into the far and the new, this wide extension of the horizon, caused confusion of moral judgment. Among the Israelites it made for a more stable moral judgment. This alone is evidence of the fact that the Jewish religion finds its classic expression in universalism.

Therefore it is of small importance in the appraisement of Judaism that its growth in numbers—for reasons which will be explained later—remained insignificant. Universal religion and universal Church are not identical, and much less so are world-religion and everybody's religion. True universalism is a universalism of *idea* and not a universalism of *number*. Not expansion, but character, is what counts. Otherwise the manifold paganism of ancient and modern times would be the most universal faith, the real world religion. If many a religious denomination extended its territory speedily and far, the fact that much, and sometimes even most, of this extension belongs to the history of politics, and not to that of religion, must not be overlooked. It has to be regarded as a result of successes in battle and in statesmanship, and not as a result of successes in relation to the word of God. He who does not draw this distinction permits the conquests of force to decide about the nature of a given faith, and lays the sword into the scale when he assesses the value of religions.

The really important point is whether a religion has made universalism the decisive characteristic of its life, whether it has clearly conceived the idea of it, and whether it has consciously set universalism before itself as its goal. From Buddhism, for example, paths go out which lead to men everywhere; it has far

transcended the frontiers of its country of origin. But all-embracing universality was never regarded as its chosen task, or as the plain token of its future. That has only been the case with Judaism, which sees and expects its historical fulfilment only in the universal kingdom of God embracing all humanity. For Judaism, universalism is an essential quality, a characteristic portion of its contents. The same thing became true afterwards of Christianity and also of Mohammedanism. They too are, therefore, world religions, so far as they derive from Judaism, and so far as they are connected with it. It is essentially Jewish belief if they behold the religious future of mankind in the light of their own religion, and thus see true religion in their religion.

Judaism also produced the command to go out to all mankind, — the idea of *mission* — which the conscious possession of true religion demands. It is not that sort of mission which is due to that natural urge for growth and power, whereby every church seeks to expand. The true “mission” arises from that inward need of religious faith, the need to teach men and to convert them, so that in the truth they may find *themselves* and find themselves united. The mission idea was indeed already contained in the election idea, for the possession of special truth is made, through the idea of election, to entail a duty to others. There was the consciousness of being sent — this word “to send” is one of the most peculiar and significant in the Bible — a consciousness not only of having a special life, but also of meaning something to others. Life received its peculiar stamp. Still more profound did the idea of mission become through the conception of mankind and of its history. The more clearly men saw in their religion the meaning of all life, of all its movements and paths, of its beginnings and its purposes, the more imperative became the duty to prepare the way for this truth, to call all the nations of the earth to share in it. They realized how that which they bore within themselves as a conviction and a yearning sprang from the depths of human nature, from that spiritual root which is the root of all men. Whithersoever they looked, they saw everywhere human beings — the human element. Different voices were heard, but they heard in them the same one note, the note which they heard arising from their own feeling and struggles. Everything spoke

to them of man's seeking and of his destiny and his calling. Wherever they listened, they heard the voice, which had first become audible in their own conscience, the word of God to man. Everywhere they saw the ways of God and the ways which led to Him. Through all the clouds that hovered over the nations the rays of revelation were to pierce, the light of which had first arisen in Israel — the rays of the revelation of God to men and of His promise to them. "Look unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth." In all the wisdom which had become known and revealed in Israel there was heard the word which was spoken by wisdom as a demand and an admonition to all men; they realized how wisdom spoke to the world, when she said: "Unto you, O men, I call; and my voice is to the sons of men." They knew what they had to say to all; they knew that Judaism spoke to all men of the innermost and most individual side of its being. What the idea of mission means here is essentially this: what is distinctively Jewish is at bottom what is distinctively human.

The missionary obligation was imposed at the very beginning of Israel's religion. Even Abraham was supposed to have received the promise which was also an exhortation: "In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed". And if in the Bible his name is interpreted to mean the "father of many nations", pious tradition understood the words to mean that he was destined to be the father of salvation to all men; it was from an old Jewish tradition that Paul took the idea. In the early chapters of the Bible seventy nations are mentioned as the human "family upon earth". And in order to comprehend in one designation everything which has a human face and thinks and meditates on earth, the oral tradition speaks of the seventy nations and the seventy languages; it has thus found a concise definition of mankind. In its picturesque language it relates how God revealed Himself in seventy languages on Sinai, and that Moses ought to have written the words of the Lord in seventy languages upon the altar. The Rabbis found it impossible to think of their religion otherwise than as having been created from the very beginning to be the religion of the world. When the Bible came to be translated into Greek, at that time the language of the educated inhabitants of the Mediterranean countries, the translation was called —



for this seems to be the correct explanation of the word — the Septuagint, the Bible of the seventy, the seventy nations, and it was indeed the missionary Bible. On the Feast of Tabernacles the priests of Israel offered up seventy sacrifices as an atonement for all nations upon earth; the altar of Jerusalem was to be the altar for the whole world; these sacrifices were an expression of the idea of Jewish responsibility for the religious welfare of mankind. Likewise the dispersion of Israel was construed as an act of providence for the benefit of the world. By a play upon words which cannot be translated, it was said that Israel's dispersion is a sowing of seed over all lands, from which the word of God is everywhere to spring up.

Judaism was the first religion to organize missions in the service of an idea, and it was Jewish propaganda which prepared the ground for the diffusion of Christianity. It was political, and not religious, reasons which, later on, put too premature a stoppage and an end to the strivings of Judaism to extend the realm of its believers. But the consciousness of missionary justification and of missionary duty has not disappeared. How it displayed itself later on will be shown in another connection. It was always maintained as an essential part of the justification *for* Judaism's existence, and as an essential part of its duty *in* its existence.

By the expansion, in principle and in actuality, of the religious community, the old national expression, the "people of Israel", acquired a religious significance; and to the conception of a people there was linked that of the religious community before God. This other conception found its clear expression in the statement that "every person who forswears idolatry is a Jew". Everyone who believed in the unity of God was acknowledged as a proselyte. And he who accepted the religion of Israel was entitled and ought to be called a son of Abraham. This was not only the opinion of a Philo, but even a decision of the Talmud. Moses Maimonides accordingly pointed out with authority to a proselyte that he might claim the fathers of Israel as his own fathers, and that he should relate the election of Israel to himself. "You also are chosen and elected. . . . Abraham is your father, just as he is ours; for he is the father of all the pious and the righteous." "Faith", he says elsewhere, "is the father of all."

The claim to be a world religion Judaism has never abandoned. Its whole history would appear petty and even incomprehensible, an exaggerated whim, were it not replete with the consciousness of this ideal. Only therein does it gain its heroic character. To suffer for the sake of a narrow idea of limited importance need be no more than honourable obstinacy. Only when a conviction has far-reaching greatness and comprehends the value of its significance is it heroic courage to be assured of the duty of existence because of this conviction. By having preserved, and by still preserving, its old spiritual possessions, Judaism maintains its unshakable belief, now as heretofore, that it is thereby guarding the religion of all humanity. The Prophets who created the idea of a world religion saw, as has been pointed out, in Israel's ever changing life no isolated existence of its own, but an essential and, in view of the importance of religion to them, the greatest, factor in the social life of all nations. Among the thinkers and poets of later Judaism there is none who did not hold the same conviction. A romantic like Jehuda Halevi, a rationalist like Moses Maimonides, a sober investigator like Levi Gersonides, and a mystical enthusiast like Isaac Lurya, to mention names from the Jewish Middle Ages alone, all maintain this firm conviction with the same emphasis, though each conceives it in a different manner. The creative power of composing prayers, which has never disappeared from Judaism, took hold of this idea again and again, giving it ever new forms, so that it has been preserved until today in the living consciousness of the community. Finally, the fact that all great and important spiritual movements during the past two thousand years have been influenced by the religious ideas of Israel — one need but mention the religious revival at the Renaissance, and socialism — the fact that within the two great religions which derive from Judaism, there are even yet Jewish ideas at work, and that every lasting religious change in them, whether intended or not, means a return to Jewish modes of belief, and the rejection of later elements which come from some other source — one need only recall the Reformation, the Anabaptists, and the Unitarian tendency in modern Protestantism — the fact that Judaism has always been a point of orientation for other religions and for religious judgment all these facts give to

the student of history confirming testimony that this Jewish claim to universalism and this Jewish expectation are justified.

In opposition to the indifference which places all its hopes on a non-religious ethics and a non-religious civilization, in opposition to that pious adoration of power for which the external successes of the Church are authoritative, Judaism adheres firmly to the conviction that the religious and moral future of mankind rests upon belief in the One God as taught by Israel, in the Eternal who brings man into life, and demands a specific line of conduct from him. This does not mean that the belief of all men will be wholly uniform and absolutely alike; the distinctiveness and variety of those who have been created in the image of God are too great and too pregnant for that; religion reaches down too deeply into that which is most individual and personal in man. Yet all will in so far have *one* belief, if all accept and fulfil that in which one of the Prophets condensed what had been apprehended by the men of God who preceded him: "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God." This type of belief in One God can unite all men.

## II. THE IDEAS OF JUDAISM

### FAITH IN GOD

It is not the task of religion to observe and to explore the world — that must be left to the various sciences — but to *judge*, to determine our personal attitude towards the world. What we experience within and around ourselves is to be understood and explained in religion not by systematizing the accumulated facts and assimilating them in thought — for this conception of the world is the province of philosophy — but rather by interpreting our experience according to its *ideal value*. Not the surface of the world, not that which has been developed, but its depths in the soul, the history of life, are to be here apprehended. What really counts in religion are the ideas of good and evil, of truth and of mere appearance, of destiny, and of the purpose of existence, of life as a whole, which is experienced in one's own individual life. Thus every religion goes back to the fundamental problem of optimism and pessimism, to the fundamental question whether existence has a meaning, whether there is a world order for good or not. The belief in the one or the other constitutes the essential difference, the contrast, between religions. The world-historical character of any particular religion is based on the resolute decisiveness with which the one or the other belief is conceived and carried out.

Such a significance of the world, such a constant law and aim ascribed to it, can be found in that alone which is different from and more than the world, different from, and more than, all that is external and tangible, different from, and more than, all growth and decay, in that alone which manifests itself not in its causality, but in the certainty of its value. Only that which is not within the sphere of causality and limitations, but, on the contrary, strives to rise above it and to get free from it; only that which depends, not upon mere occurrences and successes, but, on the contrary, contends against them and overcomes them; in fine, only that which is not merely natural and actual can contain and

bestow this meaning. Only an existence which is not content with the mere fact of existence can have any value. This "other world", which does not alone exist, but includes a meaning and an order, can be nothing else than the *good*, the *ethical*, which is revealed to every man in his innermost being, in his choice and decision, this world of the personal, towering above the world of fact. The good signifies the affirmative, the challenging, element in the world. It is the unconditional, because it has its validity at all times and in all places. It is the universal, because it is to be realised by all, and therefore it is the truly real, the meaning of the world. The belief that there is a meaning in all things can but be the belief in the good. There is only one complete rounded optimism, and that is ethical optimism.

The origin of this good, of the ethical, is not to be found in finite and limited man; it demands an unconditional, absolute foundation which is the basis of all, just as its meaning is the meaning of everything. Its basis is therefore to be found only in the One God, the outcome of whose nature is the moral law. It finds in Him its guarantee, the certainty of its eternal reality. And the good arises thus from the source of all existence; the law, with its call and its compulsion, emerges from that depth in which the secret is contained. The world, in whose life man's existence is set, and whose life and meaning he experiences, includes both the hidden and the definite, the creative and the ordered, the eternal and the ethical; both are one in the One God. He is the conclusion of all that is clear, the answer to every riddle. The alliance between secret and commandment, from which issue all existence and all significance, is based on this meaning of the world. Their unity is apprehended; commandment is linked to secret, and secret to commandment. Goodness is of God, and belongs to man, set before man by God; it is reality, and it is within the power of man to realise it. Clarity becomes complete certainty, since it springs from the hidden, from the secret. Thus there is but one optimism, comprising all which rests upon the one God: — *ethical monotheism*. It is therefore nothing but a necessary consequence if the religion of consistent pessimism, Buddhism, is able to be a religion without God, and if even the moral element in it is not an interpretation of life, but only

something which man can or does not do, without anything vital being added to his existence or taken from it.

The peculiarity of Judaism, which it possesses and has passed on to the rest of mankind, is based upon the fact that it is the religion of this ethical affirmation of the world, the religion of ethical optimism. This optimism is anything but the self-contented complacency of the man who declares the world to be good simply because he is himself well off in it, anything but an unthinking trifling which denies suffering, or explains it away, praising the best of all worlds — *la rage de soutenir que tout est bien quand on est mal*. This superficial road can lead no religious man to optimism. Moreover, nothing is more foreign to the religion of Israel. It knows too much about life not to speak of its want and suffering as want and suffering. The cry of joy in existence is less frequent and less stirring than the lament that this world of ours is a place of misery and affliction, and that our pilgrimage on earth has but a pittance of happiness. "The days of our years are three score years and ten, or even, by reason of strength, four score years; yet is their pride but labour and sorrow." So says the prayer of Moses, the man of God, and throughout the whole Hebrew Bible this note can be heard echoing. It is a book of sighs and of tears, of sorrow and affliction, a book of spiritual oppression and anguish of conscience. All the troubles of men raise their voices in it, and so, too, afterwards, in the later songs which Judaism sang through the centuries. There is also distinctly audible a note which despises the world, one might almost say, a pessimistic note, speaking, as it does so often, in all solemnity and therefore too in all optimism, and vibrating like some dark undertone.

It resounds with especial volume in the emotion of the soul which experiences the baseness of the base, the depravity of the depraved. It resounds in the feeling which is wounded by the power of the earthly and the mean, by the conflict which cleaves the world in two, in the answering determination to turn away from the low and evil things which would fill the lands of the earth. Every living moral feeling, the feeling for all that is truly real, manifests itself in this fashion. Again and again it rises in contradiction; it accuses that which desires only to rule,

it denies everything which wants merely to count; it cries out a loud "no". It must deny in order to be able to affirm; it must be able to despise and reject, so as to remain always sure of what is lofty and directed upwards. The optimism which is convinced of the ideal will think pessimistically of facts. Compared with the greatness of purpose and of destiny, the small becomes still smaller. There is no persistent benevolence without the gift of disdain, no true love of mankind without this faculty of contempt for man. The peculiarity of Judaism, its optimism, is that, despite everything, and in opposition to this world in which wickedness gains ground, it does not fall into mere resignation, nor does it become indifferent to the world. Its ideal is not that of the ancient sage who, content with his own wisdom and its peace, is no longer disturbed by the driving and striving of mankind. In this respect Judaism remained so unancient in the days of antiquity, in its will to life and in its character so different from the views of the thinkers in Greece and India. It faced the world with the will to change it, with the command to realise and to shape the good in it, with confidence which meets the day to come because it challenges the coming day. The ancient sage knows only his own place, the satisfaction of his own contentment. Judaism speaks of the way and of repentance; its call is: "Prepare the way!" It never abandons the goal of the world, since it has no doubt of God who bids men march towards it. Its optimism is the strength of the moral will.

Therefore the optimism of Judaism becomes a pessimism as against "the world", a contempt for success, a declaration against all bigness and aggression on earth. It confronts success with truth and its reality. It possesses, therefore, the power of *tragedy*, the upstanding confidence of the man who fights, and, even in defeat exults because he can invoke the future, that tragic power inherent in the will to speak the last answer and to win the final victory, the will towards the days to come. In this respect too Judaism is so entirely different from ancient thought, which knows only the tragedy of fate, the tragedy of the sufferer, and not that of the man to whom the word of God was directed: "For thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee, thou shalt speak! Be not afraid because of

them." It differed from both East and West, this Jewish drama of the man who confronts today and tomorrow with his moral confidence and his character, who sees beyond tomorrow and the day after, who makes from the world the demand which he has found in his heart, and who is absolutely sure that this demand provides the final answer, of atonement after affliction, of harmony above all discord. Moral and tragic pathos here become one. The Bible is a world of this fortifying and optimistic tragedy, and by experiencing its truth the history of Judaism grasped the meaning of the Prophets and their successors.

So this optimism became a command to Judaism. The moral will with its warfare, the heroism of man, become demands. It is an optimism which decides, which strives to bring about, to transform and to win through, which enters on the road that it has to prepare. It is, therefore, not a doctrine of joy and sorrow, which puts questions to destiny and waits for the answers, but a doctrine of the good which puts questions to man, and gives him an unerring answer in its "thou shalt". It is not the contentment of the spectator who is satisfied with a cloistered peace, but the ethical will of one who, being sure of his God, initiates and creates, in order to mould men and to renew the world, who therefore lacks classical calm, but experiences instead the peace which is born of the struggle for God. This optimism is the sense of reality which finds the real in the good that has to win its own existence. It is the mighty, prophetic, "Nevertheless". The great style of ethics, the great style of life, was thus created. And in this connection it has been said that religion is the "heroic form of existence".

The optimism of Judaism consists in a *belief in the good* which *wills* the good. It is the belief in *God*, and consequently the belief in *man*, in God through whom the good finds reality, and in man who is able to realise the good. All the ideas of Judaism can be traced back to it. So the belief or faith in man establishes a three-fold relationship. First of all, there is the belief in *ourselves*: our soul is created in the image of God; it has a certain origin, and therein its peculiar and personal quality; it has its purity and its freedom, its secret and its commandment; it has its path to God which leads out from it, and by means of atonement with



God it is always able to regain this path and this freedom. Next comes the belief in *one's neighbour*: every human being beside us, every other ego, has his individuality just as we have; he too has received from God a human soul, purity and freedom; he is at bottom the same as we, akin to us in essence, and therefore set beside us; he is our neighbour, our brother. And, finally, there is the belief in *mankind*; all men are children of God, and all their lives have the same meaning; hence there is one all-uniting task, and the time will come when they will find one another. To know of the spiritual reality of one's own life, of that of the lives of our neighbours, and of that reality in which all human life may be united, — this is the expression of Jewish optimism, whether it is directed towards ourselves, our neighbours, or mankind. It is the affirming idea of our own existence, of the existence of others, and of the whole of human existence, based upon the foundation and the idea of all existence.

These three directions of the belief in good are not to be separated in the demand which they make from one another, any more than they may be detached from their foundation, which is constituted by the One God. We cannot emphasize and verify the one without showing a will towards the others, and without experience of the origin of all. In their strength and their distinctiveness they are dependent one upon the other. Only the knowledge of our own soul, of its personal and deciding character and of the depth of its own being, gives to our spiritual relationship with the life around us and with the days to come its certainty and freedom, — gives us really our life in the world; faith in others necessitates faith in ourselves. Conversely, only in the knowledge of the soul of our fellow, and in the consciousness that that which we call our own is also possessed by our fellow, does our own individuality find its duty and domain, the world of its own life; faith in self necessitates faith in others. And, finally, only in the idea that all human life has its unity, and finds therein its ultimate task and promise, do our own ego and the ego of our fellow find their true connection, and the world of life and life in the world their true integration; faith in ourselves and in our fellows necessitates faith in mankind. All this projects its roots into the certainty that this life springs from the source

of all life, that it is called back to this source, and that its path comes from God and leads to God. It is from faith in God that faith in man draws its strength and its right, the right to pronounce this three-fold judgment: of the value of every single soul, of the value which belongs to one's fellow, and of the value which is to be ascribed to all mankind.

It is the peculiar and creative element in Jewish optimism that every belief is regarded as a *responsibility*; this idea entered into the world as the Jewish idea. Thus this faith in mankind denotes also a three-fold responsibility, and as it derives from faith in God, it is based on responsibility to Him. It is the responsibility which the individual should feel for himself before God. We are to be holy, because the Lord our God is holy. It is our responsibility before God towards our neighbour; we must "know his heart", which God gave to him, and we are to honour the image of God in him. He is to live with us, and we are to love him, for he is like us. Lastly, it is our responsibility before God to mankind: we are to be the witnesses of God on earth, in the world in which we have been placed, to sanctify His name, and thus to walk in, and to lead, the way to the re-creation of the world as the kingdom of God.

Thus the optimism of Judaism has its foundation and its integration. The good in which it believes finds in God its full certainty, and in man its definite, its absolute, task. Good was placed by God in the world of man as a moral demand, and man is therefore able to make it his possession, his world. "I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse: therefore choose life, that thou mayest live, both thou and thy seed!" Judaism shows that good is a reality, not in so far that it has been realised once and for all, but in so far that it ought to and can be realised by all. Salvation is not taken to be a ready-made possession, a miraculous treasure presented to man by Divine grace, in order that he may be saved by it and become blessed. In Judaism salvation is a duty imposed by God, which man has to fulfil "in order that he may live". It is just this duty which is salvation; for man can choose his life, he can make it true life by directing and shaping it for good, by making it his moral possession. Thus life itself becomes a commandment. What God

demands of the life of man and the good which he grants it, man's "ought" and man's possession, become equivalent. It is in accordance with the spirit of Judaism that its very optimism should have assumed the form of command, that it should speak to man about the meaning of duty.

Judaism is the only religion which has created no definite *mythology*, and that because it is fundamentally opposed to mythology. Mythology was unable to grow on its soil, since in it religion is based upon piety, upon the longing for God and the will towards Him, since it proceeds from man, who receives his life and his command from God, and since it indicates and determines the way by which man, brought into the world to choose and to decide, to grow and to develop, called by God, and in turn calling Him, may approach God and be near to Him. Therein lies the contrast with mythology. For mythology wants to hear and to shape a legend, not about man or his life and experiences, but about the life and experiences of the god or the gods, a legend about their birth and death, their creation and disappearance, their battles, victories and defeats. The doom of the gods is the deciding factor, their lot is the history of the world. It begins, not with the creation of heaven and earth, but with the birth of the gods. They are born and they in turn beget, and the years which are allotted to them are the ebb and flow of time. All cosmogonies are here theogonies; the generations of gods are the epochs of all happenings, and the twilight which sinks over them signifies the days of the end. Their success and their fall, their triumphs and their tribulations, their cravings and their jealousies, are fate for earth and man, for the firmament and its stars. As forces of chance and powers of fate, receiving fate and allotting it, guided by chance and distributing it, they dwell above the world, and for man there remains as his place and destiny nothing but acceptance with or without dignity. Here then the tragedy of man, even at its highest, is only a tragedy of fate, the drama of man who is there to await his fate and to accept it in silence — the mythological drama. Not "thou shalt", but "thou must", is inscribed over it. In Judaism it is the tragedy of the will, the tragedy of the man who chooses his life, makes his

way through the days that are vouchsafed him, and ever approaches his God in the name of conscience and of the command and of the future — this drama of human struggling, of the inner life which battles with environment, this opposition to the mythical.

Mythology has everywhere developed in manifold ways out of the imaginative dread of hovering demons and greedy souls of the dead, of multiform incalculable ghosts and gods, of whom there are as many as the various dispensations of nature and the deceits of the hour, and which finally culminate in a belief in a single divine fate, a fate for the whole world. The shapes too which it assumed were manifold, from the luxuriant growth of legend to the well constituted edifice of thought. But there is in it always the same subject, always the story of the gods or of the god, the history of their lives and their lot, their birth and rebirth, their coming and passing. What happens to the gods, the fate with which they meet, is the subject matter of the mythical. Therefore their existence is bound up with sexual differentiation which enters everywhere as a factor into the existence of the divinity. Few things are so characteristic of the peculiar, the unmythological nature of Judaism, as the fact that it remained free from this element of sex, and that to its language, however plastic, even the word "goddess" remains unknown, something impossible. Jewish belief knows nothing of the fate of the divinity, but only of His revelation, His rule and ordinances, His spirit which is revealed to all and lends meaning to all. Nothing is told of the life of the god, or of his experiences as deciding the course of the world, but only about the "living God", who manifests Himself in everything and speaks in everything, and to whom we men must answer. For His word is not an oracle, but a law and a promise. His ways are not those of chance and fate — which are both practically the same, for chance is the fate of the moment, and fate is the chance that lasts — but they are the law of the good, the ways which are also enjoined upon man that he may walk in them, and so draw near to God. At the beginning of Judaism we find the unmythological saying: "For I know him that he will command his children and his household after him, that they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment."

The life of man, created by God in order that he might find Him, man's piety, and not the life of God, is thus the true content of the Jewish religion. Existence does not consist in fate, but in a gift and a task; it has its secrecy and its clarity, and both combine in a certainty. In this his personal being, in the choice which he makes, man gains his life; he becomes a subject, and is so in relation also to his God, created and yet himself a creator, a doer of deeds, and thereby he is raised above all that is simply natural and simply necessary, and thus above all mythology. The right of man's will, the right of his action and of his future, this history which is realised and effected by man, enter into the world, and with them enters the antithesis of the mythical. So it is that life acquires its peculiar character, its inward coherence with itself and with all else, with that which is concealed and with that which is commanded. It has its process of growth and its direction, and, in the deepest sense, its history, which reveals to it the belief in the good, the belief which penetrates through the superficial and the prominent to the meaning of the whole. Life is no longer a mere sum of detailed particulars or a framework of fate, or yet a mere link in the chain of occurrences, no matter whether these are called chance or predestination — both are practically the same, since predestination is, after all, nothing but the rigid form of chance conceived as caused, or of the unfathomable conceived as determined. In place of chance there are substituted significance and its reason. The destiny of the world becomes the meaning of the world, experienced by man in his soul as also the meaning of his own existence; it becomes, indeed, the absolute order, the law which carries and exalts everything, which stands beneath and above the whole series of causes and effects. Everything in Judaism speaks of the real, of the Divine, and of the eternal; everything in the world, and in the history to which it gives rise, is a *revelation* of God — revelation, and not destiny or mythology. It is not the mythical which solves the riddle, but trust, this consciousness of being united with God and of being always near to Him. Whilst all mythology ends in pessimism, in submission to fate, be it a whim of chance or predestination, optimism finds here its path, its certainty that everything which life embraces has its meaning and its task.

It must be admitted that the ancient idea of destiny, with its belief in caprice and guilt due to chance, survived in the people of Israel from the days of childhood until the days of knowledge. It is found here and there in biblical literature like some grey, erratic boulder, a rock amid a different world — a witness to the past. Nor is this all. The manifold tendrils of mythological parasites twine round the columns of the Bible and of the subsequent literature. How could it have been otherwise? The Prophets, the singers, the narrators, of the Bible, and some of their successors too, were seers, they were poets; they too told of growth and fluctuation in nature, of the stream of history and its fires. Everything constituted for them a revelation of God, of the invisible, of Him who is exalted above every image. But they were impelled by their poetic spirit to see how the unseen entered the visible world, how the imageless shaped and created; their far-seeing, far-reaching imagination tried to comprehend how this working, commanding power entered into the human sphere. Thus all this, especially if they experienced it breaking in suddenly upon them, became for them a picture which they beheld. Just as they dwelt in surroundings from which they could not withhold their gaze, they also dwelt amidst its pictures, amidst the creatures, shapes and forms of Assyria, Babylon and Egypt, amidst the mythologies with which these lands were replete. In the life of his senses man is the child of his times and of the contemporary world. So they, too, visualized what they saw in those features and outlines, and in mythical pictures they told of that which belies all mythology, and which cannot be expressed in pictures, of that which they knew was other than anything capable of outward presentation. This juxtaposition of thought and representation, of idea and form, of insight into the unsensuous and looking at the sensuous, frequently lends to biblical style a peculiar charm.

But it is all deeply rooted. This plastic poetry springs from an urge towards religious seeking and meditation. The history of religion is always the history of language; it is so in the Indian and the Greek worlds, in the world of China and of Iran as well as in that of Palestine. In each of these, men strove their hardest to present and to express, in ever new comparisons and ever new

metaphors and words, things beyond the sphere of perception and interpretation. Moreover, language itself has its own metaphorical and mythical features, so that it has been said of mythology that it is the shadow cast by language upon thought. All that we see and hear has its own immediate effect; it makes things enter into the mind of man. The word is but a way which leads to the things. It is but a guide, a sign, a symbol; it has its directing and indicating quality. Between the word and that which it seeks to describe there is the image which is merely an intermediary. This is specially manifested when language tries to lead somewhere where our senses cannot follow. Man can speak only in metaphor of the eternal and infinite, of the Divine; it is the inexpressible and the unspeakable, and if he wishes to tell of it, he can do so only by poetry — even when science reaches down to its deepest fundamentals, it is bound to use symbols and metaphors with their poetry. All seeking, in which thought endeavours to approach God by words, resolves itself into religious poetry, into Hagada, as it is called in Jewish oral tradition. Whenever the hidden, the unfathomable, is experienced, whenever the meaning of all things is felt and grasped, then it is either the devoutness of silence, that most intimate feeling of the living God, that deepest force of religious intuition and emotion, which takes hold of man, or, again, it is the uplift to imagery which is stirred up within him, the poetry which sings in prayer of the ineffable. That is indeed why mysticism, in which this urge finds its sometimes too exuberant expression, is usually so rich in words and so fond of words, so bathed in ecstasy and poetic eloquence. It accumulates its abundant imagery of the near in the service of the remote and inexpressible.

There is always a youthfulness in religion, a spring of living impulse, if it preserves this poetic power, this strength of imagery. When religion becomes rigid in phrases and laws, one of its best parts is frozen. Its lasting freshness consists in its ability to perceive that heaven and earth constitute a word of the Eternal, to feel how the Divine lives in all things, how it reveals itself in all things, in the life of nature, and in the fluctuations of history, and how thereby everything acquires reality. In this feeling and experience religion again and again finds its springtide. But this

determines also its character and development. It is a crucial question for its character whether it preserves the feeling that everything it thinks and says about the Divine is nothing but a metaphor lying between God and the world, between God and man, only an incomplete metaphor in which the insolvable and the unspeakable remain what they are. As long as the metaphor is only a metaphor, and the Divine remains incomparably exalted above all metaphor and above all words concerning all that "is in the heaven above and upon the earth beneath and in the waters under the earth", religion possesses its poetry, but not mythology. But as soon as its metaphors purport to be definite answers, giving an account of the divine nature, or of divine fate and experience, phrases which presume to describe and to present the life and being of the Godhead, as soon as that which was poetically invented by the seeking mind is taken as something real and known, as an expression of the manner of Divine existence, so that symbols take definite shape and become conceptions, then at once the mythical seizes possession of the place where it moulds its idols. Then the Godhead is dragged down to the human plane with its experiences and thoughts, its physical limitations and its destiny. The same result occurs whether it is due to poetical legend, as it gives birth to its creations, or whether it is due to the formations of philosophical conceptions, trying to define the secret of the Divine Being. In the one case as in the other, poetry becomes a myth.

The way which leads to myth has always been remote from Judaism, despite constant changes in the history of its religious feeling and thought. There were days in Judaism when men listened to and heard those problems, which are the problems of all ages, when men sang of the miracle of the glory of God with which the world is filled. Then again there were days in which men heard the admonishing answers, which are the answers for every hour of life, when they felt the power of the commandments of God which stand before every human step. Now that which surrounds man, now that which makes demands of him, was emphasized. That which makes demands of him, this feature in religion which is clear, which has to be chosen and carried out, was at times so strongly felt as to become the decisive,



sometimes even the sole decisive, factor of the religion, and its genius then created, according to its urge, a plethora of commandments. The feeling for the inexplicable and the irrational seemed then to pale and to fade away. But Judaism always found its way back to times in which the divine mystery once more took possession of the mind and mastered it, leading some into the depths of articulate or silent devotion, and others up to the heights where they sought to see the greatness of God, and made it the theme of their poetry. The Hagada maintained its history. The consciousness of the symbol, this feeling that under all which we conceive is hidden that which grips us, and that all thinking and poetizing becomes the thinking and poetizing of metaphors, that each final answer is at bottom a picture, was reawakened at such times. Thus did Judaism have its different periods, but there is one feature which can be traced in each of them, namely, that at the cross-road all turned from mythology. The way of man was always recognized and shown. The poets, too, remained aware of what was peculiar to Judaism. They experienced the life of man as a union of secret and command; they too, therefore, acknowledged the right and obligation of the will of man, this his choice and determination, for the sake of which God put him into the world.

Thus Judaism remained true to its spirit. The peculiarity of the Prophets was that they never aimed at depicting or defining the divine nature. They wished only to show, just as their souls had experienced it, what God means to man, and what man should be before God. They speak, therefore, about the revelation of God and of the human personality which experiences it; the living God, whose full being no human mind can grasp, but whose commandment every human being should accept with his will, was to them the truth of their life. Like the Hagada, the philosophy of Judaism also adhered to this. For philosophy too there was a great "yes" in the commandment of God; but in respect to the "nature" of God, it pronounced that "no" of humility which worships God as Him for whom neither notion nor word is adequate. The only axiom in their thoughts was that God is the living and commanding God; all the attributes of God, with which the mind endows Him, were to Jewish philosophy

so many negations, intended to contrast the Divine and the mortal natures. Jewish mysticism too turned decisively in that direction. Here too God stands above all human conception and judgment, in order that all speculation may remain far distant. It is only the Divine will, manifesting itself in the ideal and moral order of the world, which reveals itself to man, and it is the human will which approaches God in the voluntary good deed. This general characteristic runs through the history of Judaism. The place and the task allotted to man leave no room for mythology, just as they leave no room for dogma, which is, at bottom, nothing but a dogma of myth.

Myth has its origin and place where the ethical is not yet at the centre of religion, and where it is not yet recognized in its absoluteness and unity, where, therefore, there is as yet no comprehension of that all-inclusive task which tells man that he has to choose his life. Myth is essentially polytheistic, since it transfers the multifariousness of nature and the coming of fate into the godhead. So it has gods, or at least different forms of the godhead; they stand before men as creatures of fate and of nature. Often they are moral too — therein polytheism has its special development — but the moral does not constitute their character and essence. To make this the essential significance of the moral is characteristic only of monotheism. The prophetic knowledge of God springs from the fundamental religious experience that God is different from all else, different from world and nature, from all destiny and fate, different from all that is created or in course of creation, from the mortal and the profane. He is different from all these, exalted above them all, or, in the words of the Hebrew Bible, He is the Holy One. He is therefore the *One*, the only One, He who is equal to none and to whom none is equal. "To whom then will ye liken me, that I should be equal to him, saith the Holy One?" He is the One, and therefore man is to resolve to follow Him above and against everything, and therefore man is permitted to serve Him alone, and no force of nature, and no form of fate. In this idea of Him who is different, in this idea of the One, the "Holy One of Israel", there spoke to the soul for the first time the commanding duty of religious resolve and religious conviction; the feeling of the

one and only reality and of the one and only truth was aroused. This religious fidelity, this piety of the conscience, which has the will and courage to accept the One, the only One, in face of the manifold and the many, is the soul of monotheism.

To Him who is the Holy One corresponds the holy, the good, the moral, and to the One God the one pronouncement and demand which God pronounces to, and demands of, man. In Him is revealed the one way, the way from man to the One God. Something that is different, and not merely a part of nature, something not of the world, is experienced in the good and the moral. The good is that which is different, different from nature and fate, and so it follows that everything spiritual and everything moral become a protest, a feeling of being different. As the ethical becomes man's possession in his innermost and most personal self, he feels its difference from everything else; he feels himself called by the One, by God, and led towards the One God. He grasps thereby what man can glean and hold of the Divine, the command that issues from the Secret to become the command of man, that which is clear to him and imposed upon him. It is the one thing which alone is good and true, and therefore the only thing which is essential to man, so that he may turn to it and shun all else. The unity of that which is different, and whence everything derives its meaning and value, this one holy and divine thing becomes in this way alone the experience of the soul. Therein monotheism discovered its life. It finds its spiritual origin in the indivisible unity of the demand of conscience, out of which its certainty has grown. Therefore it finds its clear expression not only in the saying: "Hear O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One", but also in the succeeding commandment, "and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might". Only the One God can be served with *all* that we are and have. It was just because men, in their innermost beings, found themselves pledged to the eternally binding and inviolable law, because they realized the commandment of God to be the true and only law-giving authority, and because they discovered in it the meaning of their lives, that they recognized Him as the One Lord, the Holy One. It was because they became conscious of the

*moral unity* that they could comprehend the *unity of God*. It is, therefore, one and the same thing which, on the one hand, separated men from all mythology, and, on the other hand, founded monotheism.

The difference between the many gods and the One God was not merely a difference in number — there could be no grosser error — but a difference in nature or essence. It is not a matter of an arithmetical, but of a significant, a religious, an ethical demarcation. In many of the pagan religions, especially the Greek, the plurality of gods coalesced from time to time into some sort of unity, a so-called henotheism. It came into existence either when a general divine principle was accepted as acting and living in the many gods, or when one special god, endowed with an abundance of power and effectiveness, was temporarily worshipped in place of all others. But there is in it nothing which at all resembles Israel's monotheism, or which is at all equivalent to it. This is true apart from the fact that, beside that "One God" who, as Xenophanes says, "is greatest among gods and men", all the other gods still demand reverence, and are recognized and worshipped as gods. The decisive factor is something else: that "greatest god", and that universally divine element, are not to be compared with the One God of Israel, because they are not what the Holy One is, because the ethical, proclaiming itself to man, does not constitute their nature, is not that wherein their divinity reveals itself to man out of the Hidden, and because for that reason moral action is not demanded as the true and fitting worship of God.

Thus the religious value of monotheism consists not in numerical unity, but in the cause whence this unity proceeds, in the *content* of the idea of God. The God of Israel is not the only One because He alone is, and accomplishes that which all the other gods of the heavens together accomplish and are, but by virtue of his being *different* from them all, and because he acts differently from them all. The nature of God is entirely opposed to that of the gods; He is not merely more and more exalted than they, He is, in relation to them, incomparable and unique. For He alone is the living, creating and commanding God who reveals the one thing which is commanded; it is peculiar to Him alone

that man can truly serve Him only by the fulfilment of moral demands. Hence it was not, as already pointed out, mere development, but the great contradiction, the other principle, indeed a new creation, a revelation, when the doctrine of the One God of Israel was proclaimed. "Thus saith the Lord, the King of Israel, and his redeemer, the Lord of Hosts; I am the first, and I am the last, and beside me there is no God."

It has been paradoxically maintained that the idea of God is in itself no more religious than, for instance, the idea of gravitation. There is some truth in this. For it is possible to accept the existence of God on philosophical grounds, so as to be able to explain the cosmic order, and to establish a primary cause of the process of nature. In relation to *that* God the paradox might be justified. The philosophical conception of God, this final formula of philosophy, is in itself really no richer in religious significance than any other. The science of religion may doubtless refer to this conception as a result of the comprehension of nature, but faith can find neither basis nor force in it. The gift of this religious certainty is conveyed solely by all that God means to our existence and our soul, by the inner consistency which our *life* thus gains, by all that which is granted it of moral, sanctifying power and of answer to our questions and demands, by all that wherein our spiritual nature finds its relation with the Divine, its meaning and its destiny, and finally by that feeling and listening which realises that God calls to us each day of our lives, "Where art thou?"

The religion which man possesses rests therefore not simply on the fact that he recognizes the existence of God. Rather do we find religion if we know that our life is bound up with something eternal, if we feel that we are linked with God, and that He is *our* God. He becomes our God if we, as the old phrase has it, *love* Him, if we get from Him our trust and humility, our courage and our peace, if we are able to raise ourselves up to Him and pray to Him, if we lay ourselves open in our innermost being to His revelation and law. The manner in which we grasp and express this inner connection is always only in the form of a similitude, and only an expression of the human soul. Our praising, and our talking about, God, with their use of "I" and "Thou",

shape the features of the personal, and our meditating concerning God, which employs the word "He", forms the idea of Him. But whether we approach God with devout words of intimacy, or whether we wish to approach God by pure thought, whether the idea or the personal tries to express itself the more forcefully, is essentially the same, if only we make as our very own that on which all turns, that for *us* He is the One, that He is *our* God. Of *our* God our minds may form their own conceptions and ideas, and our hearts can concurrently pray to Him: "Thou, O Lord, art our Father, our Redeemer; thy name is from everlasting." "Whom have I in heaven but Thee? And there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee. My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever." That is why Judaism speaks so little of religious belief and confession of faith. But it speaks instead of that which includes all things, it speaks of the living God, of Him who is God to every man. Only thus does the idea of God become a *religious* one, only thus does it find its religious strength. To know of this One God, in whom all things and each thing find meaning and significance, to bear witness to Him, to trust in Him, to find shelter in Him, to believe in Him, that is what Israel taught mankind, *that* constitutes the monotheism given to the world by the Prophets of Israel.

So it is that the characteristic feature of Judaism is the relation of God to man. One consciousness, *the consciousness of being created*, is essential to it. The conception and expression of this came to the world as Jewish possessions; they are peculiar to the belief in the One God. When he faces fate and nature and their gods, man feels himself dependent, dependent upon these gods in the occurrences and accidents of his life, wholly dependent upon fate and upon the universe too. He feels himself compelled and driven, wholly "saved" and elect, or wholly rejected. When he faced the One God, the Israelite felt quite differently: for he knew himself to have been created by God, created just as everything else had been created. His life, and all life round about him, thus became for him the revelation of the One God; in the religious sense, revelation and creation are the same. The consciousness which filled the Israelite was the consciousness of

being united with the One, with Him who is different from everything else, of being embraced and sustained by Him, of knowing that in Him lies the clue to the secret of man's origin, of the origin of everything, of the life of all living things, of the existence of all that exists. Man experiences in himself the meaning of the whole world. Man and the world, beginning and future too, are linked up in one certainty of life, in a conviction that all life was bestowed, is upheld, and will be kept in safety for ever. The One God is the God of the world, He is the God of the beginning and of the end, and He is *my* God. "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and they that dwell therein." In place of the legends concerning formation and annihilation, as they exist in mythology, we get here the idea of creation, this spiritual experience of the relation of the One living God with all things human, the whole world and all time. In place of fatalism, which shows only the chains and abysses of the inevitable, there is substituted the idea of divine omni-presence, the presence of God in His creation. The mystery of growth becomes thus the certainty of origin and of life. Not mere happening, but creation and divine action, characterise the principle of the world.

With this consciousness of being created there enters into the existence of finite and transient man the feeling of infinitude and eternity. The nature of the creating God is beyond all human knowledge and conjecture, beyond the boundaries of the earth and the world — therein lies the feeling of His infinitude and eternity — but our life derives from Him, so that we are related and near to Him, we commune with Him, and He is present and with us. Compared with Him we are as "dust and ashes", but nevertheless we belong to Him; He is the unfathomable, the inscrutable, and yet we emanate from Him. Thus does the feeling of the dark Secret become the feeling of infinite protection. That which lies deeply hidden and that in which we are securely sheltered, the eternal secret and the eternal protection, are *one* word in biblical language. All existence gains its relation with the unconditioned, with the infinite and the eternal; it receives its lasting answer. Created life is the life which receives its significance from God. The whole world, this realm of the mortal, is nevertheless the world of God; He is the Holy One, and yet

the God of the world. "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of Hosts, the whole earth is full of His glory." This becomes the experience of the man who realises that the One God is his God, and who therefore grasps the meaning of all life in his own life. The manifold now becomes linked with the One, the transitory with the eternal, that which lies open before us with the unfathomable; the connection between all, and between all and the One, is established. The word of the metaphor — full of profound symbolism — of the covenant made between God and man, and between God and the world, and all time to come, could be used here of creation. Between God and man, and between God and the world, this covenant is established; the world, like man, is given a place in religion.

Everything religious has its paradox, and is therefore not merely a postulate, but an absolute conviction. In it there dwells the unity of that which seems to be incompatible, an interlacement of opposites, and so too in the consciousness of being created the outward contradiction is spiritually unified. In it the feeling of separation and that of belonging, of *this* world and *that* world, of the *here* and the *there*, are united. Both are contained in it, the sense of distance and of nearness, of loftiness and intimacy, of the boundless and of the self, of the infinite and the inward, of the mystery and the revealer, the assurance alike of miracle and of law. God is the nameless, the incomprehensible, and the unattainable, and yet he created my life; he is the unfathomable, the secret one, the inexpressible, and yet all existence is derived from him. He is the worker of miracles, for whom nothing is too miraculous, and yet from him all life derives its order and its law. Jewish religiousness is conscious of the unity of both of these apparent opposites. All that the words otherworldness and indwelling, transcendence and immanence, seek to express is only a conceptual metaphor of the two sides of this paradox. It describes the two poles of this single religious feeling, the two poles of the conviction of the man who is sure that in the One God he possesses *his* God. If these words attempt to be more than this, if they appear as definite and excluding conceptions, then they tear asunder that which lives as a single religious feeling or



conviction in the man who experiences in himself the miracle of the creation of the world.

Though both the Far and the Near are understood and felt to be one, it may happen that now the one, now the other, at a certain moment, in a certain individual, is more or less emphasized and distinguished. The single feeling or conviction has its varieties and its stresses, and therefore also its tensions. That explains why in the Hebrew Bible and in the later Jewish literature the one as well as the other found its special and its manifold expression. It is, primarily, the absolute exaltedness of God, that greatness which is not only great, but towers up into mystery, which is here experienced and expressed. The One God is exalted above earth and world, wholly different from the earthly and from outward nature. He is "the dweller on high", as the Prophet designates him, "the Holy One", as that ever recurring word declares, he is the exalted One. All religions deal with that which is greater and mightier than man; they feel it and seek it, fearing and striving. But all the other religions knew only about the great and the mighty, which therefore became for them the horrible and the appalling. Only the belief in the One God achieved that feeling for loftiness, for greatness, in its uniqueness, in its purity; — for height and depth in their unity, one might be almost inclined to say. Here alone was this feeling realized. The One who alone is exalted, *the exalted* itself, was here discovered. All that is sublime in art has its root and meaning in the fact that it tries to be the symbol and the image of the Divine. Not until the Divine in its Unity, that which is above all things and different from them, was recognized and realized, did this feeling acquire its whole content and its perfect expression. The One God is the Exalted One.

He is the Exalted One, and everything earthly is regarded in the light of this contrast. Everything, the Hebrew Bible reiterates, lies at an unspeakable depth below him. All that appears to man to be the greatest, the largest and most powerful of earthly things are as naught when compared with him. "All nations are as nothing before him; they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity." They are only a "drop in a bucket" or "the small dust of the balance", the parts of the earth are like "a grain of

sand", and a thousand years are in his sight "but as yesterday when it is passed". Therefore he is to man the Incomprehensible, the Infinite, and between him and the mortal stretches the darkness of secrecy. In all religion there is this presentiment of the hidden, the far off; in the faith in the One God this becomes a peculiar feeling of the divine secrecy, a consciousness of God's infinitude. In childlike fashion this is expressed in the saying: "The Lord dwells in the thick darkness", and in Elihu's brooding subtlety in the words: "Teach us what we shall say unto him; for we cannot order our speech by reason of darkness". No word which tries to name or to compare him reaches to his veritable being. Therefore devoutness becomes in the end silence. The profundity of stillness is the final and greatest power which takes hold of man, when the Exalted One, the Infinite God, enters within the horizon of his consciousness. "Let all the earth keep silence before him." But beside this silence which gripped men's souls, the thought within the metaphors and their poetry stirred them too. Again and again the Hebrew Bible seeks to speak of God's sublimity. All that can describe grandeur and infinitude, omnipotence and eternity, is elaborated with an abundance of words in the Bible, which otherwise speaks so often with a "heavy tongue". It sang hymns about the exaltedness of God, of his "glory" and his splendour.

All this, then, became the song of creation. For this conviction, with its paradox, that the world, above which God "dwells on high", was nevertheless created by him, and that it is the world of God, remained alive and brought about the total result. God differs from everything else, but everything derives its life from him. The name of God is impressed upon it. Thus the universe became the message of his greatness, its comprehensive and clear expression, its mighty word; in the universe was manifested the revelation of the One God; its unity and harmony became apparent. The multifariousness of this world and of the beyond found its connection with the One, and the universe received therewith its expression and its meaning, and it was endowed with something ideal, a vital character, a soul and a tongue. The Divine poetry of heaven and earth was apprehended, and there was heard the message in which the innumerable voices of

all created things praised the glory of God. The great harmony of the whole world took possession of men's souls; the world began to speak, to sing and to rejoice. A new territory for feeling and its poetic expression was acquired, and therewith a novel way for Israelite genius to tread. A new poetry threw open fresh spaces and distances. Now even *within* the world religion spoke to man. "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows his handiwork." "O Lord our God, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! Thou hast set thy glory above the heavens."

This relationship with God, the consciousness of being created, could be even more vividly realized in the individual's own life and in human existence generally. Here this feeling received its most devout, its most intimate, meaning; for here it is the nearness of God which is experienced before all else. All that can be expressed by the feeling of inner connection and belonging revealed here its content, its word and its warmth. Refuge and shelter, protection and assistance, indeed all the gifts of beneficence and faithfulness, all the best that man can experience in his intercourse with his fellow man, became the expression of the fact that God, the One, the Holy and Exalted One, prepared our lives and reveals himself in them. With a completely simple and natural spiritual conviction, this world and the world beyond are here placed side by side, and their unity is felt as the answer to this concomitance. Where conceptions and words express separateness, religious feeling experiences and apprehends a profound inner connection. Here above all is experienced this marvellous and significant unity of the far and the near. God is the "most High", and in spite, and on account, of this, "man dwells in his secret place" and "in his fortress". He is the "Almighty", and in spite, and on account, of this, man finds rest "under his shadow"; he is "from everlasting to everlasting", and yet he has "been our dwelling place in all generations". A teacher of the Talmud pointed out that the Bible always mentions together the divine exaltedness and the feeling of belonging to him, his remoteness and nearness, uniting them into one. Whenever it refers to God as the Highest, it also declares him to be the nearest; only both these conceptions taken together form the

Biblical statements about him. "For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty and a terrible . . . He executes the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loves the stranger." "For thus says the High and Lofty One that inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones."

Since both, the near and the far, are vitally apprehended, since both are emphasized, there must be inherent in this religious feeling something which pulls in two directions, a *tension*, within which it strains and yearns; in this tension the religious experience of the Children of Israel has been special and peculiar. It is undetachable from the feeling of having been created by God. The convinced assurance of this feeling is like a power which emerges out of conflicting elements, out of the consciousness of being united and yet separate. It thus contains a hither and thither, a trembling and a longing, a seeking and a possessing, a trembling because of the remoteness of God, and a longing for his nearness, a seeking which wants to reach him, and a possessing which is sure of him. Anxiety and confidence unite together. As the Prophet, in like mood, says, "and thine heart shall tremble and be enlarged". This certainty, sure as it may be, acquires an especial note, becomes a *yearning*, which vibrates in all human certainty; it becomes a hopeful questioning, and a questioning hope, that that which is experienced should always be real. It is the yearning of the son of the earth towards the infinite and the eternal which has entered into his life, and which nevertheless remains in the vastness of the infinite and of the eternal, a yearning towards his God, with whom he knows himself united, and from whom he yet also knows himself to be separated.

In this yearning is heard the consciousness of man that he has been created, the tension of the soul, the driving urge of the 'I', which tries to overpower the feeling of remoteness with that of nearness, to get to where it truly belongs, the inner emotion of the man who cannot remain content with his finiteness, but seeks to be raised above it to the true meaning of his life, who craves to be in complete possession of that feeling of the presence

of God which has been granted to him, to breathe in that air of infinitude and eternity which embraces his earthly existence. "The nearness of God is my good; I have made the Lord God my refuge", thus the Psalmist expresses his yearning. Hence it contains nothing of that merely romantic craving, the craving for that which is forbidden and impossible of attainment, but there is expressed in it the conviction of trust, the desire of the self-assured soul to be in full possession of all which has been given to it by God, to taste already here the beyond, and to enjoy in the present the feeling of eternity. Only where the paradox of the God who is both exalted and yet present is realized, only where the soul, conscious of the farness of God, yet feels its very life depends upon his nearness, will this yearning for God be aroused. Where such tension is not experienced, where all oppositeness is done away with, and the "I" is dissolved in the infinite, where man sinking into ecstasy, cries, "I am God, and God is I", there religious yearning lacks its cause and its opportunity.

Only where man cries out for his God is he also able to invoke him. That is why the mysticism which makes man become one with God knows no prayer, but only absorption and contemplation. The prayer to the One God arises from this tension, from this yearning, with its fear and its knowledge, from this yearning of trust, this trust of yearning. Here man turns his face towards the exalted God, to him "who dwells on high", but he knows him to be near. He is the God of the farthest remoteness, and yet he is the One who is *with* man, and to whom man may cry: "Hear my prayer!" "The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth." "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near." Yearning and prayer, they both know this word concerning nearness and its certainty, just as they know the word concerning fear: "Be not far from me", even as they also know the sorrowful and almost despairing question: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Yet here too, amid all these problems and doubts, there yet remains this cry of nearness: "*my* God!". Whatever is expressed in prayer, be it longing to elevate one's soul to God, to a purer and freer life, be it the desire for deliverance from danger and affliction, or redemption from sin and guilt, be it the desire

for the good things in life and for the road of blessing, it is always this tension between the realization of the exaltedness of God and of his presence, out of which there arises the feeling of him who prays to the Lord his God. Thus there is always in it that wonderful intermingling of the mysterious and the certain, in which the voice of mortality and the voice of eternity become as one; it is as if heaven and earth touched one another in it: the far God becomes the God of nearness. So prayer has now its stillness and its peace — devoutness is peace in yearning, and yearning is the longing of devoutness — now, like yearning, prayer has its moments of urging and uplifting, its dramatic and its tragic quality. In prayer too the life-impulse of the man, who knows that God has created him, expands and turns towards the foundation of its reality and its existence. To the living God there turns the living man, whose innermost being craves for elevation and fulfilment, for strength and intensification, who desires to get beyond the limitations of mortality. Hence to speak of the expansion of life may be a true word of prayer. "Out of straitness I called upon the Lord: the Lord answered me, and led me into enlargement."

In all this, in the feeling of being created, in yearning and prayer, something innermost and profound, something individual, stirs in man. The realization of the meaning of each man's own life, the distinctive individuality of his existence, the affirmation of its foundation, finds therein its expression. It is the most personal and most human element in man which experiences all this, and therefore it can only manifest itself in forms and words of human experience, of human trust and fear, of human shrinking and confidence. Each feeling and vibration in which it reveals itself can have only a personal character and tone, that of personal speech. It is the "I" in man which experiences all these things, which knows itself to be connected with God, the "I" which demands its Thou, and which therefore has its conversation with God, seeks to raise itself up to God, and therefore addresses him with a Thou, — him, the Lord who is infinite, secret; the "I" and its God stand face to face with one another. "I am his, and he is mine", so it is expressed in the prayers of Judaism; 'he is my God'; not only 'he', but 'Thou for me'. The far God, who

is apprehended as the God of nearness, is this unity of He and Thou. That is why these two words are so frequently interchanged, even in a single sentence, in the Bible. He and Thou are made by the speaker to follow immediately upon one another; all meditation about God soon resolves itself into invocations addressed to him, into an expression of personal intimacy and connection. "The Lord is a high tower for the oppressed, a high tower in times of trouble, and they that know thy name put their trust in thee: for thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek thee." "He shall cover thee with his pinions and under his wings shalt thou take refuge; his truth is a shield and a buckler . . . Because thou hast said, The Lord is my refuge, and hast made the most High thy habitation." "It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto thy name, O most High." "Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord has dealt bountifully with thee. For thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling." Again and again this up and down from "he" to "thou", and from "thou" to "he", goes on in the Hebrew Bible. In these waves of emotion there is an approaching and grasping, an overtaking of voices, a seeking, an attracting, an arresting, in these varied notes of assurance. "He" repeatedly turns into "Thou".

Human yearning and beseeching thus experience the personal God, and all the qualities of personal activity are felt in them. In such yearning and beseeching man apprehends his God. It is the stirring of his soul which, in them, makes God his, and by means of them he becomes assured of God; the knowledge of the path which leads from God to the soul of man, and from the soul to its God, manifests itself here in words. They make no attempt to give a conceptual definition of the divine nature. They do not so much describe the attributes of God — as was well noted by mediaeval Jewish religious philosophy — as forms of human experience, the forms in which the living God reveals himself. The God of Judaism is not a God composed of qualities, he is no mere conception, not a God of philosophy or dogma; even to Jewish religious philosophy he was not that, for its connection with the Hebrew Bible was too intimate, and the old biblical feeling in it was too strong. It also had this religious experience:

since he is conceived by man as the living God, he is felt to be a personal God. The sublime secret One who embraces all things penetrates into the innermost existence of man; he is therefore understood personally, and regarded as personal. In the depths of the soul of man there lives and grows the personal; before the soul and its "I" stands the eternal Lord as the near and personal God. The yearning and the prayer of man thus find him, in the same way as the *idea* of God enters into the meditation and speculation of man. To the paradox of being created is joined the paradox that human life possesses the Infinite, the Unfathomable One, as its personal God.

The abundance of this sense and consciousness of God seeks after ever new forms of expression. It is already found in the phrase: "my God"; this phrase was already used in the Babylonian penitential Psalms, but not until it came to be applied to the One God did it assume its complete, its peculiar, meaning. But for the devout conviction in which religious feeling lives, this phrase is not enough. This conviction makes itself felt in ever fresh utterances of the heart: God is Father; this term can already be found, in its mythological sense, in the prayers of ancient, and even primitive, religions. But, applied to the One God, it assumes a new meaning; it is the explanation of the significance of each human life. God is saviour and protector, helper and supporter, shepherd and guardian. He is the healer, the merciful One and the redeemer, he is shelter and protector, pinnacle and shield, light and salvation, he is hope, consolation and life. Religious genius has here shaped its own language; it fashioned it to suit the pious feelings of all the generations to come; these found in it the true expression of their innermost life. When this feeling wants to reveal itself, or when it wanted not only to receive, but also to stretch its wings, thus becoming creative, it began to remould old words, to give a fresh tone and meaning to the old vocabulary. This is that poetic element which exists in all religion. The men who have the profoundest realization of the meaning of their existence, and seek to give it utterance, become the poets of God, poets of the One, the Eternal. They discovered the fitting words about God, the metaphors of everlasting validity; they were privileged to know of the nearness of



God, and the music in their souls permitted them to express it. Religion in song was thus created, lyrics in which the soul sings of its deepest and most personal experiences, and tells of "all which God has done for it". Here was fashioned a language, which has become a language for all mankind.

This creative power of language, to which the Hebrew Bible bears witness, remained alive. The soul desires to grasp again and to express what it has experienced, what it continues to discover in the old words, and what it still can realize in them. The struggle for inner self-maintenance, the battle for spiritual selfpossession, becomes a seeking and finding of appropriate speech, a conquest of the right word. In language the mind discovers itself; there it gains consciousness. The post-biblical period too possessed the vivid sense of having been created, causing it to feel the unity of exaltedness and intimacy, which it expressed in its own way. It formed, especially in its prayers, a set of words, which were intended to contain and to combine both. Now it is "our father, our king", now "our father in heaven", and again, "the Lord, our God, ruler of the world"; these formulae became like a single indivisible expression, almost a single inseparable word: he is in heaven, and yet our father, he is ruler of the world, and yet our God. The simile too, as created in the Hagada of that time, grew out of the desire of finding a designation for the unity of the two conceptions. God is compared with a king, and man is the child of the king. God is the king, but he is also father, he is the exalted One, and yet also the near One. There was thus a single picture to represent loftiness and intimacy.

Wherever the personal is so strongly emphasized, there is always the danger that some anthropomorphic elements will enter the conception of God, and in order to avoid this, the transcendence of God had to be firmly stressed. How rigorously this was done may be seen from the Palestinian and Babylonian translations of the Bible, the so-called Targumim. But the danger that it was sought to eliminate emerged again in a different form. The Divine Being could easily become something abstract, a mere idea, a platonic deity, and the need of the soul for something which was present, something living, produced for

itself something that was nearer, something indeed near. The imagination of the people placed intermediaries between the remote God and man as his messengers and servants, and philosophy, in order to establish the connection between heaven and earth, created the personification of the world-force, the helper of God, the Logos. Only when the paradox — in which lives the religious conviction that the exalted God is, nevertheless, our God, the present God — had been once more apprehended, could this tendency be overcome. Then out of the conception of God there arose again the living God, our Father, and all beings between him and man, which might have been the precursors of a mythology, disappeared into nullity. The immediateness of God was thus again experienced, the intimacy between him and the heart, this peculiar feature of Jewish religiousness; nothing could stand between him and man, nothing could distract man from his God. A Jewish saying has remained familiar, which came into use after the destruction of the Temple; it begins with sorrow, and ends in tranquil conviction, so that all else has vanished: "No person stands up for us, no person approaches God on our behalf; upon whom therefore shall we depend? Upon our Father in heaven!"

Thus the poetry of the personal God remained in the mind, and was ever born anew. The whole meaning which in that poetry God has for man, all the melody and value which human life thus contains, was expressed by the Prophets and Psalmists in the word love, the love which human existence experiences from God. This word has become outstanding in the Jewish religion. The feeling of being loved is that feeling of belonging to another which is incalculable and indefinable, the feeling of being sustained, borne, raised up. Their word, love (*chesed*), is the expression of that which, arising out of the hidden, is, nevertheless, experienced as the most certain thing in all the world, and as the possession and strength of the soul. The word, love, is the expression of the profundity of inner peacefulness and union, of all which enables one man to feel what other men feel, which transforms "he" into "thou", "my" into "thy", which unites those things which lie apart, which makes the distant into a possession, and renders the secret thing the most assured. To

mythology, too, this word love was known, for it too spoke of the love of the gods; but its love was love in the form of fate, the love of the gods for a few chosen ones, for their favourites on earth, and not what it is in Judaism: the divine love as something which is present and actual, which is the meaning of each human life, that which lives in all things, the note which sounds in all human existence. "God loves man"; in Judaism this means that God is our God, that we were created by him, and that we belong to him; the hidden which encompasses our lives in its depths is at the same time the worth and content of our lives, that in which life finds an answer and an affirmation, that which leads us to believe in our existence. It is the fundamental feeling of religion which seeks to express itself in this word "love". It contains therefore an abundance of varied ideas by which it attempts to indicate the richness of its meaning in its strength and its tenderness. No translation can reproduce successfully the full meaning and implication of this single biblical word. Whatever the human heart possesses of secret conviction, whatever a life receives and contains of bliss, is included in the message of the divine love.

Often it is the tender, caring, soothing, parental love which the biblical metaphors seek to present. "As a father pities his children, so the Lord pities them that fear him." "As a man chastens his son, so the Lord thy God chastens thee." "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet I will not forget thee." "When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up." "As one whom his mother comforts, so will I comfort you." Then there rings out the voice of the conquering power of love, which cannot be limited, restricted, or overcome, which is "strong as death", commanding all else to be silent, and yet pronouncing the last word: "I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love. . . . My heart is turned within me, my compassions are kindled together. . . . For I am God, and not man; the Holy One in the midst of thee: I will not return to destroy." "For the Lord will not cast off for ever: for though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the fullness of his love." "In a little wrath I hid my face from

thee for a moment; but with everlasting love will I have mercy on thee, says the Lord, thy redeemer. For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my love shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, says the Lord who has mercy on thee." In the same way, it is patient and loving faithfulness, which never tires and never rests, it is the power of beneficence, it is goodness, ever the same and ever new, never failing and infinite, for which pious meditation in its search has found the fitting expression and image. "The love of the Lord never ceases, his compassion fails not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness." "The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord." "The Lord is good to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works." "For thy love is great above the heavens: and thy faithfulness reaches unto the clouds." "When I said, My foot slips; thy love, O Lord, help me up." "How excellent is thy love, O God: therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings." "For his love is great towards us: and the faithfulness of the Lord endures for ever." "And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good."

In most of these sayings about love there occurs also the Hebrew word for pity or compassion. In the language of the Hebrew Bible the word for pity gets its nuance of meaning from the love of a mother towards the child which she has born, that most natural and selfevident love, that love which has not grown up or developed, but which is as old as the life on which it spends itself. It can therefore be applied as a metaphor for the love of God towards his creatures. There is in the Hebrew word nothing of that which the word compassion might convey in other languages, nothing of *mere* pity, of that sentimental condescension, in virtue of which a stronger personality gives something to a weaker one. The biblical word for compassion is the expression of a love which has always existed, and will abide for ever. There is also present that "nevertheless" which the consciousness of being loved cherishes, that conviction which, in spite of everything, knows no doubt, the conviction of the covenant which can never be destroyed, of the bond which can never be broken, that faith

in the divine which will never be lost, however empty and desolate life may sometimes appear. Compassion is, therefore, constantly called "great", immeasurable and everlasting. Just as, with the feeling of being created, the sense of the infinite and the eternal, of that which reaches beyond all limits and lines of the human, enters the soul of man, so also the feeling of divine love creates the same sense of infinity and eternity. The love of God is felt as the *Divine grace*, a gift of the unconditioned and the unlimited, a possession which is not acquired by anything or narrowed by anything, as that which is offered to every life, and which every life can experience. All this assumes again a personal expression, becomes for man the experience of his own existence, speaks to him of all that which his days contained, of their special paths and episodes, of the lowlands which they had to cross, and of the heights which they were permitted to ascend. Here too the human "I" stands before its God, and finds the word "thou". As Jacob said, "I am not worthy of the least of all the love and the faithfulness which thou hast shown unto thy servant". And as David said, "Who am I, O Lord God, and what is my house, that thou hast brought me thus far?" Above all, in the Psalms there are those sentences which contain everything: "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: who forgives all thine iniquities; who heals all thy diseases; who redeems thy life from destruction; who crowns thee with love and compassion; who satisfies thy mouth with good things, so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's."

Thus did the conviction of the love of God find expression in human words; for through these words alone the soul can speak. It is in its personal, in its deepest, essence that all this is experienced; only in the forms of the personal can all this be revealed to it and emerge from it. The more intimately the soul feels all which is given to life, the more humanly it must speak of it. Love can be understood by human beings only in the form of human love, and they cannot think about it without poetic imagination. Men cannot pray in conceptions, or express in definitions or abstract terms the yearning which would rise above the limitations of existence. If the love of God becomes to us a symbol

of the meaning of our life, then it is always the personal God who draws near to us. We can sing of his compassion and his grace, telling how the ways from heaven to earth, and from infinity and eternity, are opened to the life of man. Of him we can say, "*Who is like unto the Lord our God, who dwells on high, who humbles himself to behold the things that are in heaven and on the earth*". "From heaven the Lord looks down upon the earth; to hear the sighing of the prisoner; to loose those that are appointed to death."

Just as in the Hebrew Bible, so also in Talmudic literature, love became the expression of the fundamental religious experience of the man who knows himself to have been created by God. The attributes of God, according to the Talmud, are contained in that sentence of the Pentateuch which tells how man can experience the "glory of God". "And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord, a God full of compassion and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in love and faithfulness, keeping love unto the thousandth generation, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty." In these "thirteen attributes or qualities", as they are called, there was found, above all, the manifold description of divine love — for, according to the Rabbinic interpretation, the opening word "the Lord" contains the idea of love, and it was also heard in the concluding word concerning the necessity of punishment. This sentence of the Bible became a symbol; it found its place as a formula of faith in the book of prayer. Two Scriptural sayings acquired this character; they became to the community covenant words, confessions of faith, the one the assertion of the divine Unity: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One"; the other about the love of God. Pathos of history is heard in both.

The feeling of having been created, the feeling of divine love, assumes an especial mode of expression when it enters the self-consciousness of man. Then it becomes a feeling of *humility*. Humility too is ultimately the consciousness of that which is given to man by God, the consciousness that he exists through God alone. It is a knowledge of the secret, of the depths. In it too is contained that double-sidedness, those seemingly contradic-

tory elements of remoteness and union. Just as in the idea of God these apparent contradictions of his being both the Exalted One and the Near One are combined, so too in the mind of the humble, together with the consciousness of being inadequate and powerless, of being a mere creature, there lives also the conviction of having been called into existence by *God*, of being preserved and protected by him, of carrying the Eternal within, of being unspeakably small before God, and yet *through* him unspeakably great, mortal and insignificant, and yet a child of God. Hence the essential meaning of humility, as it grew up in the Jewish soul, is the knowledge of the position which man has in infinity and eternity; it is the full religious feeling of life in the man who knows that he has been created by God. Thus there is in it nothing deliberate or intentional, nothing which crushes or oppresses; it is no self-humiliation, but it is insight into man's own existence, the realization that it has come into being through God. It is the mood which pervades life when it becomes conscious of its profoundness, when it listens within to itself; it is the sound in which the harmony of the great creation — the music of the spheres one is inclined to say — rises up in the human soul. This spiritual attitude of the soul is relative to man as such, and is therefore not limited to any particular hour. It belongs to the finite which is conscious of the infinite out of which it arose, to the creature as standing over against his Creator; therefore it exists only where the consciousness of creation is vivid in man.

Inherent in this humility there is the feeling of the value which is added to life by its being a creation of God, a feeling that the universe to which man belongs is a cosmos created by God. It is, therefore, an entirely optimistic feeling, a consciousness of the eternal value and law, into which man's own existence is fitted. Only where life has discovered its meaning can it unfold itself. A mere feeling of dependence would be consistent with fatalism and its pessimism, or even demand it; it could grow up in a world without value, a world of chaos. It has been rightly pointed out that fate is only the counterpart of chaos; the one as well as the other stand for meaninglessness. But in humility there lives the faith in the good, and, therefore, though it is a

feeling common to humanity, it is also an intensely personal feeling of the individual; *his* own particular life generates it. For he feels it towards his God, towards him to whom he can speak; it is his own self-consciousness. In his own individual existence he experiences the fact that his life is created, finite, limited, and dependent, and yet that it sprang from eternity and that it is connected with it, that it has its straitness and yet its dignity. That paradox of the far and the near God enters by humility into the being of man. The problem of his earthly existence finds its answer in the unity of the contradiction that life can be so petty and yet so great, so limited and yet enshrined in eternity, that it is finite, and yet has its quality of infinitude. Here again religion does not seek to solve the riddle; it maintains towards it an attitude of reverence. But it says that the riddle *has* a solution, that the contradiction *has* its harmony, that a meaning of life, of the existence of every man, reveals itself through living it. Through paradox life regains its confidence.

Humility thus enables man to feel the individual in the general, and the general in the individual, so that speaking about it became almost a song. Through the Bible this song was given to those who seek and ask. Seldom indeed has the weakness of man been described more touchingly, and seldom has his greatness been so gloriously praised. Both the notes resound with equal strength, for the most part joined directly, and without any transition, in order to let the full impression of the paradox be felt more clearly. "What is man that thou art mindful of him? And the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour." "As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourishes. For the wind passes over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more. But the love of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children, to such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them." "Thou turnest man to dust; and sayest, Return, ye children of men." Here religious lyric gained its many tones, and the song of the life of man reveals the fulness of its counterpoint.

It is the song of the meaning of all our days. The convic-



tion of the soul which lives in it cannot be destroyed even by suffering. It is able to remain, because here conviction and mystery condition and carry each other. When the Divine reveals itself to man in its remoteness and in its nearness, there is always that twofold feeling in the soul, the feeling of mystery and the feeling of security; both embrace and permeate one another. But in times of affliction and misery, these two become contrasts, voices which oppose one another. The riddle penetrates life with a powerful question, it emerges from the depths into the light of day, and tends to become the great contradiction of existence. But even this contradiction becomes in the Israelite soul only the counterpoint which carries the greater harmony; the voices from above and below come together in it once more. Unity is maintained even in the contradiction; in all the contrast the unity of God is maintained, and therewith the unity of life, giving to it its meaning and value, and so bringing solution and conviction. Life came from the One God, and it is borne by him even in all suffering and in spite of suffering. Humility abides even in times of affliction; it abides as *resignation* to the love of God.

Not even under pressure of suffering does this religious feeling become a mere feeling of dependence, with its fatalism and its pessimism. Optimistic conviction speaks even then its affirmative and personal word. Its resignation has nothing in common with that fatalism which finds fatigued composure in the idea of everything being fixed and determined, or with that resignation which becomes rigid in the paralysing consciousness of the inevitability of all that happens and of the vanity of all volition, or with that melancholy meditation which is so immersed in coercive necessitarianism that it loses the power or the wish to seek and to enquire. Still less has it any connection with the dull indifference of him who becomes apathetic under the blows dealt him by a destiny which has brought about his downfall. The resignation to the love of God, as it is religiously experienced, is not "philosophy"; it is not contemplation; is not a freezing unto death. It is nothing but the yearning to overcome the feeling of the Far by the feeling of the Near — a yearning which knows how to rise above all the limitations and barriers of human existence.

It is devoutness, and it is prayer; it prays questioning, and, even when it questions, it prays. "Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" A word which constantly reappears is the word "why", one of the peculiar words of the Hebrew Bible; but this "why" too remains a word of prayer. Just because it is a prayer is it different from many other questionings elsewhere which seem to resemble it. Its deepest characteristic is the silence of devoutness. "I have stilled and quieted my soul." "I was dumb, I opened not my mouth; because thou didst it." "It is good for a man that he sit alone and keep silence, because God has laid it upon him."

One expression of resignation, a phrase from the Book of Job, became a popular saying. "The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." The expression, "Blessed be the name of the Lord", which is contained in it, soon attained a certain position and significance; it became the regular prelude, as also the conclusion, to the prayers in which humility speaks of its feeling in regard to divine love. The realization of the greatness and the unity of God can be heard in it, that unity of all things because they are founded upon God, by means of which life is also able to become conscious of its unity throughout its varied days and experiences. "Blessed be the Lord, who daily bears our burden, even the God of our salvation." Man can bless only the *One* God, and only that man can bless him who experiences him as the God of all times, as the God of the fathers and of the children, and as the God of the dark, as well as of the bright, hours. Therefore to bless God was also appropriate for the prayers of the suffering. In the Talmud this note is markedly struck. "Man must bless God in his affliction as well as in his joy." "Be not like one of the idolators: when all goes well with him, he honours his gods, but if misfortune overcomes him, he curses them. Not so with the Israelites. If God sends them happiness, they bless him, and if God afflicts them with sorrow, they bless him." This last sentence, which finds in this sameness of feeling towards God a characteristic element of monotheism and its essential difference from paganism, is due to Rabbi Akiba. He also coined the saying: "Whatever God does he does for the best." This was his life's confession; he experienced suffer-

ing of many kinds on many days. He was able to say this without it sounding like a mocking of misfortune. It was not calculated wisdom, but religiousness, which produced this and many a similar phrase. In them the peculiarity of Judaism reveals itself; for specifically Jewish is this message of something higher, something lasting and eternal, which is heard by the soul, and enables it to possess and preserve its confident assurance, firm above all contradictions which would seek to overthrow it.

Here resignation and trust are united; the one, as the other, says, "Blessed be God". Together with the question caused by affliction comes simultaneously the answer of God's love; all feelings of being lost and abandoned are encompassed by the consciousness of being supported and protected, of being embraced by "the everlasting arms", as the metaphor in the ancient "Blessing of Moses" expresses it. In its connection with personality humility is always also *trust in God*. Here also there is the same tension between the far, that which lies beyond and is hidden, and the near, that which is here and now and assured, between unfathomableness and intimacy, between the feeling of distance and that of relationship. Here we have again the wistfulness which asks and also answers, the fear which is also conscious of possession, just like the double aspect of yearning. In resignation all questioning stands close to the abiding answer, which neither wavers nor falters. In trust in God the answer stands close before each question, no matter whence it comes. Here too again we get the unity of seeking and finding; there is no finding which is not continual seeking, and no seeking which is not continual finding: resignation remains trust, and trust resignation. It is the unity of unrest and stillness, of waiting and expectation, of question and answer. "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? And why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God." "My soul is silent unto God: from him comes my salvation. He only is my rock and my salvation; he is my defence; I shall not be moved." "Return unto thy rest, O my soul." "Bless the Lord, O my soul."

To the personal has thus been added the eternal. The conversation between man and himself has become his conversation with God; the question of the monologue has become the answer to the prayer. The words "my soul" are the discovery of the Psalmist, those words through which man becomes conscious of his "I" and of his position in the universe and in eternity, through which he returns from eternity to himself, through which prayer enters into his life. Moreover, these two words acquired their meaning through those other two words, which are associated with them, — those two primary words of religion: "my God". In the twain, "my soul" and "my God", secret and certainty, question and answer, are interlocked; the covenant between God and man is expressed in them, — the soul which belongs to God, and God who is the God of the soul. The doubt, the "if", which the soul cries out again and again, is answered by the "nevertheless", as it is pronounced by God, and this "nevertheless" can stand unshaken against all the changes of time with all their repetition of the "if". "If a host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: if war should rise against me, in this will I be confident." "And yet for all that, if they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and break my covenant with them: for I am the Lord their God." "Yea, even if I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me." Present and future are here joined together in all their tension. The question of the future gains its answer in the conviction which is experienced in the present, and the question raised by the present finds its answer in the conviction upon which the future is built. The future becomes spiritually present; and into the darkness in which the future lies shines the light of confidence. "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills: whence comes my help? My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth. He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keeps thee will not slumber. Behold, he that keeps Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps." "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy."

This confidence unites the soul with its God, with the Abiding and the Eternal. It is, therefore, not conditioned by the casual present, or dependent upon its successes; this spiritual confidence

is very different in its certitude from the certitude which a man seeks to prove and afford to himself. It is quite other than mere practical wisdom. There exist, in the disguise of religion, maxims of life which constitute merely the vindication of the way which some individual chose to follow, a belated excuse for that which he did, a philosophy of necessity, a last resort of the soul in regard to its weaknesses. There also exists, under the cover of religion, a still more questionable philosophy of life, the apology of the happy possessor, which is but a vainglorious record of his successes, the trust in God of the possessor who feels convinced that God is with the victor. The religion of Israel never defended either the swollen preachings of power or the achievements of success. Wherever it spoke of confidence, it was never because an earthly good fortune justified it, or as a plea for the common activities of men. It spoke of confidence, though the course of events seemed to bear witness against this trust, just because it had to bear witness against the confidence of the world. In its confidence there remained always present the tension between the experience of life and its meaning; it derived its strength not from the results, but from the Secret, and therefore it was always yearning as well as confidence.

In Jewish literature trust in God is also called faith. But in Judaism faith has nothing of the dogmatic and denominational significance which it elsewhere possesses. It does not refer to assertions and declarations, in which a knowledge of the Beyond is offered as a gift of grace; it does not announce that certain excellences and authorities are to be accepted as the excellences and authorities of faith; it is not surrounded by theory and scholasticism. That is the very reason why in Judaism there are no rigid confessions of faith, no dogmatic system with an elaborate structure, seeking by thought to penetrate into the heavens. In Judaism faith is nothing but the living consciousness of the Omnipresent, the feeling of the nearness of God, of his revelation, which manifests itself in all things, of the divine creativeness, which lives in everything. It is the capacity of the soul to perceive the abiding and changeless in the transitory, the invisible in the visible, the Secret in the created, and which is thus linked with, and is convinced of, the Eternal. This conviction is not sustained

by speculation and gnosis, or by facts and proofs. Hence there is in it nothing subtly reasoned out, nothing demonstrated or expounded. On the contrary, it is the opposite of the faith which has to be set forth by arguments or established by victories; it has no need of asseverations, and all which they can express; no need for the temporary triumphs of today. The biblical word for faith really connotes inner firmness and peace, the strength of man's soul and its constancy; it does not so much mean something which man *ought* to have, as something which he *may* have, something not fixed and complete, but ever new and developing, the yearning of conviction and the conviction of yearning. A man of faith is he who always experiences true reality. So the Hebrew Bible says, "The just shall live by his faith". "If ye have not faith, surely ye shall not be established". "I have faith, even if I said: I am sorely afflicted." And in later times too this faith was praised; the Talmud calls the Israelites "men of faith, children of men of faith". Even this faith is at bottom only that from which the religious experience of Judaism sets out: the consciousness of being created by the One God. It is the affirmation of the meaning and the value of life, the conviction and confidence of the man to whom the Secret which encompasses the all has become the meaning of his own personal life, and who thus knows that he is the child of God. Thus was it possible for one of the old teachers to declare that everything revealed in the Bible was included in the one sentence: "The just shall live by his faith." In his faith man possesses his life; it tells him what his life is, that it comes from the Eternal, the One, the Living, God.

In the feeling of being created religion is only given its beginning. With it is united another essential element by means of which Jewish religiousness attains its completion and wholeness: the consciousness of *being able to create and of being called upon to create*. To be both created, and yet creator, is the Jewish world of religion, its one and its all. The will, with the command which is enjoined upon it, finds here its place. Presentiment and task, yearning and duty, the secret source and the definite path, become united and permeate each other.

Man experiences the reality of the good; for this is the great moral experience which filled the Prophets with all its power.

Man finds that by doing good he is enabled to create something, to give to the good a concrete existence, and thus also to form and shape his own life, to make the good constitute his life. He experiences the creative power and the creative command of his soul. The demanding and commanding, the admonishing and the driving, elements of his existence reveal themselves to him; he hears now, not only, as before, what his existence is, but also all that it can and should be. If till now he has experienced his life as an object, something that was caused and that had become, he now begins to feel himself to be a subject, which causes and creates. Till now he knew that he was brought into existence — “in spite of yourself you were created, in spite of yourself you were born, in spite of yourself you are alive”. But now he is conscious that he can *conduct* his life — “freedom is granted”; he realizes that he was created by God in order that he might himself create, and that he is able to create because he was himself created by God. Life issues from eternity, and passes again into eternity, given and borne; before, he experienced the secret which encompassed him, *now* he experiences how he is responsible for his own life, and how he shapes it and governs it from hour to hour. Now he comprehends his life as a task imposed upon him; it was fashioned by some higher power, and yet it is there so that he himself may fashion it. It comes forth from the darkness of the riddle, and yet it stands in the light of the commandment. Each grasps and grips the other, profundity and aim, origin and direction, the creation of God which gave us our existence, and the deed of man which makes it ever new, that which is of God and that which is of man, the secret and the revealed. “The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.”

It thus becomes the *second fundamental experience* of the Israelite religion. To the riddle is joined what is clear and definite, to the unfathomable the commanded, to that which embraces man that which he should himself comprehend, to the secret of his origin the demand of the way he should go, to the reality created by God the reality which man should create, to the realization of the certainty which is contained in the hidden that

other certainty which is given by the commandment. If the former feeling gave man his place in the universe and enabled him to know the world to which he belongs, this other feeling lifts him out of the universe and enables him to gain a knowledge of the world which should belong to him. If in the former feeling the Life of all life became emphasized, the meaning which is the meaning of all, then in the second feeling is emphasized the special position and value of man, the significance which is peculiar to him alone. If, at first, came the searching query with its Whence, Whither and Why, which took hold of man, there comes now the decisive answer with its Thou Shalt and Thou Canst. If religion showed in the beginning the way from God to man, it now shows the way from man to God. Secret and commandment become united; it is only both together which give the complete meaning to our lives. The unity of both is religion as Judaism possesses it.

Thus there comes into religion the second great paradox, with its tension and its certainty, a paradox which is not conditioned by mere facts. In this contradiction there arises a new meaning. A new religious harmony emerges out of this opposition: man is created, and yet creates; he is a product, and yet produces; he belongs to the world, and yet is above the world; his life exists only through God, and is yet to possess its independence. A spiritual unity, an answer to life's problems, are evolved from this opposition between miracle and freedom, between limiting unfathomableness and emancipating demand. In this paradox, with the higher affirmation which it expresses, Judaism has its speciality, which makes it different from all other religions. For all other religions only affirm, and cause men to experience the feeling, that man has been created, but not that he exists upon earth in order himself to create. They possess and foster the first religious feeling of dependence upon the eternal and the infinite, and, as this means everything to them, it soon comes about that the idea of a fate, of a doom enclosing all things, creeps into religion; here the miracle means everything, and the deed is in comparison nothing, or, at any rate, insignificant. Here faith knows only that each life has an allotted destiny, to which man is elected, or from which he is rejected, but not that he himself



chooses or moulds his own life, so as himself to fashion his own destiny. In Judaism, by this task of choosing the way, by this commandment of the deed, Jewish religiousness finds its rhythm and its movement; exhortation and demand are just as much living elements in religion as the feeling of having been created and formed. In Judaism the world with its infinity and eternity lays hold of man, but he also must lay hold of it, and bring to realization in it something infinite and eternal. Through faith he experiences the meaning of the world; through action he is to give to it a meaning. He has received his life, and he is to fulfil it. In the experience of the soul life and its law become one. In the unity of both, with all its paradox, its tension and its certainty, consists the distinctive religiousness of Judaism.

Only now does the relationship between man and God attain its full significance. Man, who experiences that he has to realize the good, experiences also that God stands before him as the Commanding One, the Judging, the Just One; he experiences that God demands of him the moral deed, and that He puts before him the command in order that he shall fulfil it. "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee." "And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee...." The God of creating and of granting love is at the same time the holy ethical Will; He is the God of the commandment, the God who demands righteousness. Just as Divine love gave and created, carries and embraces, so Divine righteousness commands; it places unconditional duty in the forefront of the life of man. If love tells him what, through God, he is, righteousness tells him what, before God, he ought to be. Only the two together are the full revelation of the One God; only the two together disclose the full meaning of human existence; the deepest content of the unity of God is revealed in their unity. Of this unity it is a special note that the hidden and unfathomable elements of our life tell us of the love of God, and that the clear and definite elements of our existence tell us of God's commanding righteousness. It is man as personal who experiences all this; the commandment speaks to his "I". He hears himself called upon by the Lord, he hears with his very life the question put to him by God, "Where art thou?" As

the personal God, God stands before man as personal. The thought of God becomes the word with which God addresses us, intended for us, us alone and before all; it becomes the expression of our obligation, coming from Him exhortingly, so that we, here upon earth, may grasp it. Man, as yearning, began to converse with God by turning towards Him with question and hope, exclaiming, "my God"; and now the soul learns how to reply to God, and how God turns toward man, demanding and expecting. Now the word of God enters into the life of man, demanding a decision from him, the word, namely, "I am the Lord thy God, thou *shalt*".

The more vividly man realizes that God commands, the more conscious does he become of the fact that the good is a matter of his will, that he is free, created for freedom, free even before God, and that he, as the Prophet says, "chooses the will of God". The independent power of his spirituality, his directing personality, were given him by God, the strength to build up his own life. He stands before his God as an ethical being, so that, according to the significant Biblical metaphor, he walks through life "before God's face". He can approach God, and let his conscience and work speak. Everything which we receive and experience in our existence, — so we feel in our humility — is granted to us by God. But one thing — so the commanding God lets us know — belongs to us, and is our own; this one thing has power to give us meaning and value: it is the free and moral deed. For everything else we have to thank God, but the deed we may attribute to ourselves. It gives us a definite place before the Almighty, chosen by ourselves. As Rabbi Chanina expressed it in an epigrammatical sentence, "Everything lies in the hand of God save the fear of God". Or as Rabbi Eleazar said, "God receives nothing from His world save the fear of God". The Rabbinic, and especially the later mystical, literature expanded this idea poetically. They tell how the will of the righteous is, in a way, decisive even for God, and how man becomes the preserver and renewer of the world, how he gives and returns to the world that because of which it is allowed to exist, how through him God becomes near to the world, and how through him God becomes far from it. Thus, to stress again the

complete contradiction to mythology, in which the fate of the godhead becomes the history of the world, in Jewish literature the opposite idea is expressed in ever new forms and metaphors, the idea, namely, that the fate of the universe proceeds from man, that he creates a destiny for the infinite, so that the history of his life becomes the destiny of the world. The poetry of human freedom, of the creative power of the good, created its peculiar imagery.

Thus to Judaism it is man as acting who stands forth in the world which was created by God, and in which he too was himself created, as a subject; he is lifted up out of the mere series of objects. He has a special peculiarity of his own; he *chooses* the world in which he wills to live. The good is placed clearly and distinctly before him as the law of his life, as something which he is to realize and possess, wherein he is to prove his special peculiarity. If he succeeds in making the good his work, clearness and definiteness enter into his life. The hidden and the unfathomable, on the one hand, and the clear and that which must be fulfilled, upon the other, become one within him. The "I" of man is founded in the eternal deeps; in the moral deed it manifests and reveals itself. This unity of secret and commandment gives to human life its true unity. In it the meaning of life finds its duty, and the duty of life its meaning; the origin of life finds its unconditioned way, and the way of life its unconditioned origin. The answer which eternity makes to man, and the answer which he makes to eternity, ring together in the life of man. Man has faith in life, for this convinced faith contains both the faith in the Source of life and the faith in the command enjoined upon it. This unity, in which both these aspects of faith are stressed, has always remained the peculiar and distinguishing feature of the Jewish religion. We may notice, in contrast with this unity, the characteristic deficiency in Schleiermacher's oft quoted conception of religion as having its essence in the profound feeling of infinite dependence. For this conception completely disregards the *demanding* element of this unity, with its commandment of freedom, a deficiency which goes back to the false attitude taken up by this philosopher towards the Old Testament.

As, in Judaism, man experiences his human quality, so he learns how he, created by God, ought to create reality, how he, man, may yet have some value for God. The command to produce has a place in his life; by him himself the history of his existence is to be shaped. There is imposed upon him the task of deciding for or against God. He may turn his face towards God, or may avert it from Him. God is with men, but also we men can be with Him. God is near to us, but we too can and should draw near to Him. The life given to us is the covenant of God with us, but it is also to *become* the covenant between us and God, which we are to guard and protect. Infinity reveals itself in all finiteness, but we men are also able to elevate our finiteness into infinity, even as the Talmud says, we can "win eternity by virtue of a single hour". "The earth is full of the glory of God", but we are also able and commanded to fill it with the glory of God; just as it is a revelation of God and His creation, it is also to become a revelation of man and bear witness to his creativeness. God reveals Himself to man, and man reveals himself to his God. By dint of the good deed man approaches God; in it he finds God ever anew, and with it he makes God *his* God. The phrase "my God", which stands at the beginning of religion, becomes now the goal and the task of man. Here again is the great paradox with its certainty. The life of man has its secret and its path; the secret is a question put *by* us; the path a question put *to* us. In God life finds the answer to its secret, and the commandment for its path; the answer becomes commandment, and the commandment becomes answer.

In relation to that element in man which is peculiar to him and free, and chooses the good, the Hebrew Bible often uses the expression: "serve the Lord". It means that we can *do* something *for* God — not only feel something in humility. We are able to give something to Him through that wherein we are independent, through the fulfilment of the moral law, through the realization of the good. That which belongs to us, which is ours, that which we did not merely receive from God but which *we* create, our activity and bringing about, *this* we offer Him; we create it before Him and for Him. In the service of freedom we turn towards Him, in order to impose His law upon ourselves. We are able

to offer something to Him, through our own power to thank Him, to acknowledge Him through our own decision, through the duty to which we turn. All acknowledgment of God is in Judaism essentially this personal activity of man, the deed he carries out, through which he approaches God, the path he chooses in order to walk before God. The confession of God and the service of God are one and the same. Both consist in man's resolve to undertake and to maintain the good. Only idols are served by a mere bowing down before them. "To serve and bow down" is in the Bible a regular term for idolatry.

By serving the One God thus, man, to use an old simile, becomes a "helper of God in the work of creation"; he prepares a realm for God, he brings about and establishes an abode for the Eternal. By his birth man occupies a place which is not of his own choosing. He was put in a certain definite area; here he was created, he grew up on its soil. His life has a homeland; it determined his beginning, out of which he develops. Every man has experience of all which he did not himself make, of the framework of his existence, of all which surrounds and encircles him. Here and not there, did God plant him down. But there is also one section of his life into which he was *not* placed by God, into which, on the contrary, he, as it were, introduces God, a section which he chooses in his freedom, so that it may become his, and, through him, become God's. As the old phrase has it, he can take and make as his own a living world, a world of the good, of the Divine, a world which serves God, and in which the command of God alone rules. For this world the old Rabbis coined the phrase: "the kingdom of God". It is the kingdom of him who chooses God, who "makes the will of God his own will", and thus binds himself to God, the kingdom which is not to be attained only through birth and origin, but through the will of man; it is not given, but achieved. This kingdom, therefore, belongs especially to the proselyte, to the man whose own resolve led him to the command of God. The kingdom of God means in Judaism not something merely ecstatic, or something which is purely supermundane and of the world beyond; it signifies nothing but the state of life of that man who, in free and ready obedience, has set himself to obey God and to serve Him, so

that in that obedience he shapes his life and lives in the world in which reign the eternal moral law and the commandment of God, in which, by virtue of man's deeds, the world beyond is brought down into this world, and there and here become as one. To enter the kingdom of God means to raise oneself above the fixed and necessitarian side of life, and to acquire the life to which God has summoned man, in which he is near God, with God, and before God. It is in the work of man that the kingdom of God is revealed. Thus did the old Rabbis declare: "God says, Take my kingdom and my commandments as your own." "When Israel said, We will do all that which the Lord has spoken to us, — then there was a kingdom of God." "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is One! that is the word of the kingdom of God." It is fundamentally the same thing as that which the Bible declares to be the purpose of the Israelite people: "ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation". The kingdom of God is the ethical, ideal reality which is to be created by man.

The feeling of all this, the feeling which dominates man before the commanding God, is the pious awe of the *fear of God*: reverence before the Eternal. We can feel reverence only for that which is higher than we, yet to which we are related or attached, and we can only feel reverence for it if it stands before us, as moral beings, in its own moral exaltedness. Reverence, therefore, exists for the teacher and leader, for mother and father; we feel reverence, indeed, for everything human in which we acknowledge the inherent Divine, reverence, therefore, for God above all — this is the truest reverence — but no reverence for either destiny or nature. Even the sublime as such does not really inspire reverence. Compared with the exalted God who created us, and to whom even what is greatest upon earth is as small as the smallest, we are filled with humility; not until we experience that exalted God as the Commanding, Just and Holy One, as the One who says to man "thou shalt", do we feel reverence. He who, in all his work and striving, is filled with the conviction of serving the Eternal, the Holy God, he whose soul is vividly conscious of the eternity and infinity of admonishing and demanding duty, is seized by reverence for God, by the fear of God. "Thou shalt fear thy God" is thus the exclamation which com-

pletes the "thou shalt" — the Amen to the ethical command. To be able to feel reverence is the mark of nobility of soul; it is the most distinguished of human emotions — the feeling of the man who, in his freedom, is able to look upwards, who knows of the greatness of the ethical, of the command of freedom and its responsibilities. It is the servile spirit which lacks reverence.

Fear of God is one of the emphasized expressions of the Bible; it is called: "the beginning of wisdom". It becomes the designation of religion. With good reason too, for a characteristic mark of Judaism, the feeling that man, created by God, is himself a creator, is contained in it. Judaism is essentially the religion of reverence. Where there is only the feeling of dependence, the consciousness that man and world were created, there we get the religion of pure humility. Only where, as in Judaism, the command which causes men to resolve and decide is experienced, is reverence also superadded. In Judaism it constitutes the fundamental religious feeling beside and together with humility, fusing them into one in the unity of man, so that in the unity of both he experiences his own unity. This reverence is the humility of the free man, active and creative before his God, and through it religiousness acquires its active and propelling element; it is therefore very different from mere fear, the fear of fate; it is even consciously opposed to it. "Who art thou, that thou shouldst be afraid. . . ."

Like humility too, this feeling of the free man has its variations; sometimes the feeling of remoteness, sometimes the feeling of nearness, is accentuated; now the aloofness of "thou shalt" is stressed, now the immediateness of "thou canst". First it is reverential awe, listening heavenwards, with which the soul vibrates; then it is the soaring feeling of devotion to God. For this feeling the Bible framed the term: *love for God*. This love springs also from the soul of man, who knows that he is free; it is the staking of his freedom and of his ethical being, the decision of the "I" to accept the will of God and His command. Man gives his love to God. Hence in the Bible we find the law of God and the love of man towards Him connected together, and not the love of God to man and that of man for Him. The love of God which gives does not correspond to our love, but

to our humility with its confidence. Love towards God is equivalent to reverence for Him — “to love and to fear” is as one word in the Bible. Both, like trust and humility, only express different shades of the same feeling. In reverence the command precedes the will, in love the will precedes the command. When we feel that we serve God, we feel reverence for Him; if we feel that we *serve* God, we feel love towards Him, we feel that we attach ourselves to God, that we bind ourselves to Him. Our whole individuality and independence are manifested in this love; not only a part of our being, but our complete self, our personality and freedom, “all our heart, all our soul, and all our might”. Therefore, in Judaism, love towards God is never a mere feeling, it belongs to the sphere of the ethical activity of man, it embraces a clear task, a definite command, it means something ethical, and therefore “thou shalt” can be enjoined upon it. “And thou *shalt* love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.” It is in our deeds that our love towards God and our reverence for Him find expression.

But as both are stressed, reverence and love, there is also in this dual feeling — as with humility and trust — a tension, something urging and straining. It is again that tension between the far and the near, between the consciousness of that which has been demanded and of that which has been achieved. Here, too, this present world and the future world may be said to come in again; they form a unity; yet between them our feeling moves this way and that. In duty, too, the far becomes near, and the near far. With the consciousness of hearing the command of God, just as with the feeling of being created, the sense of infinity enters the soul of man. The command comes from God, but it is directed to man, and from man it finds its fulfilment; “thou shalt” is without end, eternal as the eternal God, but it is always having a beginning in man’s “thou canst”. To every “thou shalt” spoken by God answer the reverence and love of man, and to all reverence and love of man responds ever anew God’s “thou shalt”. So in both there is tension, and with it yearning, that answering hope and that hoping answer, that questioning knowledge and that knowing questioning. They may



be heard in reverence as they may be heard in love. They are the desire of the soul to realise that which has been commanded, so as to raise its existence to the level of the Divine — the yearning for the world of the good. It passes and penetrates through all the certainty of the service of God and of His kingdom, of the freedom of man and of his creative power; it carries the finite towards the infinite, and brings the infinite down towards the finite.

One thing there is which gives this yearning its strong and powerful tone, and that is the belief which it implies in the reality of the good. All creative will is at the same time a faith, faith in the reality of that towards which the will is directed. It is this which distinguishes it from mere desire or wish. He who experiences how he may create the good realizes the good as a reality. If it reveals itself to him as the command of God, the Truly Existing One, if the faith of the creative man rises up out of the deep faith in the commanding God, it stands in front of him as the abiding, as the eternal reality. The good grows out of the Source and the Meaning of all existence, out of the Unconditioned, and it has its guarantee and its certainty in eternity. So with the good there comes into the life of man the real, the definite; it comes to him as the command of the unconditioned, as something, therefore, which is beyond controversy, something which demands the decision of man, something he must select or reject. As thereby ethics and religion are connected together at the very root, so the command of the good acquires the meaning of the pure ethical obligation of man. Here then arose the idea of the categorical imperative, of the categorical responsibility. Morality is given the significance of the absolute. The distinction between good and evil becomes something permanent and constant; it forms the task of decision which is set for man. It cannot be traced back into the past as some tradition, or as something arbitrary, or as wise human intention; for it is founded upon the very being of the One God. It is our duty to do good, "as the Lord liveth, in truth".

With this faith in the commanding God there appeared also the opposition to any sort of ethical opportunism, opposition to any sort of weakening or blurring of ethical definiteness, to any sort of despair about the reality of the good and its absoluteness.

This faith cannot compound or compromise, or connect itself with anything but the good. The commanding God utters his unconditional "thou shalt" and "thou shalt not"; He gives commandments, not advice. It was the religion of Israel which established for the first time this great Either — Or. Herein too may be observed its unmythical character; it is by the absoluteness of the command, which brings the unconditioned, the real, into man's life, that the mythological conception of Fate is completely overcome. Its divergence from antiquity is also to be seen here. Greek philosophy lacks above all that strong demanding element in ethics. Though Plato recognized the good as having eternal existence, he was lacking in this idea of command, of the categorical. Hence he became the ancestor of contemplation. The whole ancient world knows nothing of that earnestness which Judaism possesses, of that resoluteness of life which hears the injunction, "Serve the Lord your God!", of that absoluteness which is contained in the phrase, "with all thine heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy might!" The Jewish conception of duty, the conception of the path which has to be cleared and followed by man, is entirely foreign to antiquity. The latter possesses the idealism of speculative contemplation, but not the idealism of the striving deed; it has the meditative optimism of philosophy, but not the commanding optimism of the ethical battle.

Only faith in the One God, the living consciousness of belonging to the One, were able to demand the moral decision of man; here for the first time the one and only necessary thing was placed before him, the one thing all important and essential. As there are no other gods but the One God, there is no other commandment but His commandment. "Thou shalt be whole with the Lord, thy God." To the Jew the unity of God finds its determining expression in the unity of the ethical. He who realises and fulfils the Moral Law, which is One, acknowledges God as the One; here is found the demanding and final significance of Monotheism, here is found the full human sincerity of its acceptance. As Monotheism means the One God, so also it means the one command, the one righteousness, the one path, and the one morality. It means the rejection of all indifference, all neutrality and unconcern, of all that which was so often considered in antiquity

as the ideal of the philosopher. It also constitutes a protest against all the double morality, which was preached and obeyed in previous, and also in more recent centuries, with one special moral code for rulers and another for the ruled, one for the great and one for the small, one for the strong and one for the weak, be they the weak in power or the weak in spirit. That sentence of the Psalmist, "Teach me thy way, O Lord; I will walk in thy truth: unite my heart to fear thy name", acquired in Jewish thought throughout the centuries — not only for its mysticism and its philosophy, but equally for the meditation and prayer of the people — an ever richer meaning. It spoke of the one heart which found its way to the One God and to the one command. If man attains the unity of the heart, and if with it he follows the one way, he possesses the true reverence for the One God and brings Monotheism to its realization. Thus does he make of God the One — as the ancient Hebrew morning prayer says, he "unifies God" through his love for Him. The creative element in man found its powerful note in this desire "to unify God". Through his moral action man creates the unity of God upon earth. The divine Unity becomes, as it were, the task of man.

It is in this unity of the good that its absoluteness and exclusiveness find expression. It is the good alone which man should choose, so that everything which is not good should be rejected by him. Each commandment is, at the same time, the demand to turn aside and to be different, or, as the Hebrew Bible has it, to be holy. All morality implies a contradiction and a protest; the feeling of an opposite lives in it, the feeling of something which turns away from God, of ungodliness. Evil is this godlessness; it is that which is without meaning, without value, without reality; it is devoid of creativeness and freedom, of the revelation of the Divine. It is that which does not create reality, but denies and destroys, and so the Hebrew Bible calls it "death". "See, I have set before thee this day life and good, death and evil." Evil lacks that which enables man to make God *his* God; it is outside the kingdom of God, the kingdom of life, but belongs to the province of mere fate, that province of death, that which can neither create nor fulfil. It is that which has turned away from the Divine, which has become unholy by and of itself, empty

of the Divine. That is how Jewish religiousness experiences it, and through it, too, recognizes the eternal God. "For thou art not a God that hast pleasure in wickedness: neither shall evil dwell with thee." "Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity." As ethical exaltedness, as eternal holiness, God's commanding righteousness stands before man. "And the holy God shall be sanctified in righteousness." The commandment of God is the abiding contrast to, the eternal contradiction of, everything foul and low. Evil, if the free man turns to it, and practises it, signifies not only a contrast to God's holiness, but a denial of, and an attack upon, it. Evil is that which is hostile to God, that which, as it were, summons God to repel it. "Their tongue and their doing are against the Lord."

This reaction of the Divine against godlessness and unholiness is called in the Bible the *jealousy* of God, His *wrath*. These are human words. Just as faith in divine love, when it seeks for the most intimate name, finds it in the most anthropomorphic terms, so also does faith in God's command, in His righteousness and holiness. We cannot, on the one hand, approve that God should be called the Father in heaven, and, on the other hand, condemn it that He should be spoken of as the Wrathful One. The terms "holy jealousy" and "holy wrath" were justly coined. Thus does the definite exclusiveness of the good become conscious of itself, this resistance to every injustice, whoever commits it, this stirring of the conscience of mankind, which becomes alive and active in the individual. It is also a part of reverence that man should know of the Jealous God, that he should know himself to be near to Him. The command of God is only thus apprehended in its whole demanding power, and in that which should be done, and in that which should be rejected, the cause of God is experienced as the cause of man. "Do I not hate them, O Lord, that hate thee? And do I not loathe those that rise up against thee?" In these human words there speaks all that is absolute and exclusive in the good, its element of insistence and demand. It is characteristic of ethical monotheism that, like the mercy of God, His jealousy too speaks to the soul. His jealousy is the powerful expression for the categorical, for the one and

the absolute, the one commandment of the one God. All compromises, and all the evasions and ingenuities of a double morality, are incompatible with the Jealous God.

A God without wrath or jealousy would be a God dwelling above the world, above its moral command and its moral need, a God without man, or the "thou shalt" which is spoken to him — the God of Epicurus enthroned on some distant star. Without holy wrath human virtue is likewise but an easily contented virtue, to which sin is sin only if it is directed against oneself, or perhaps against one's fellow, the sentimental attitude which sees with heavy heart the evil upon earth, but is so concerned with the sorrow of its own soul as to forget entirely that sin ought to be attacked, defeated and destroyed. In pure composure, wise and pious as it may be, there is no creative force for good or fighting will against evil; all decision has its passion, all morality its hot inner emotion. In order to respect one must be able also to despise, and in order to resolve to do the right, one must be capable of wrath. The warriors of God know God's wrath. The true reason for the poor understanding of its meaning often lies in the optimism of fortunate people who are satisfied with their own well-being, and even more often in a lack of ethical reaction to evil, and in the absence of feeling the sinfulness of all that is unjust upon the earth. Only he who can maintain unperturbedly the equilibrium of his soul and his "consciousness of salvation" in the sight of so many outrages against humanity, can easily boast aloud of his religious "progressiveness" as compared with those who still believe in a Jealous God.

There is no wrong which is done *merely to an individual*. Every iniquity "cries unto God", the Commanding and Jealous One, or, as the Talmud says, "Not only the blood of one human being was shed, for in the blood of the one the blood of a whole world cries unto God". Every evil deed is a sin against God and the Divine, against the element of freedom in human life. He who fears and loves God carries within himself that holy jealousy; he detests and hates not just this or that evil deed, but he detests and hates evil as such. "Ye that love the Lord, hate evil." If some wrong, wherever and against whomsoever it is committed, does not stir the soul as if it had been committed against our-

selves, then we have not yet experienced the Commanding and Jealous God, or understood His wrath against sin. No moral neutrality or moral convenience, no indifference or indolence towards any wrong upon earth, is compatible with faith in God. If history seems only too often to prove the contrary, this shows once again with what imperfect conceptions the opinion of men that they were religious has often been associated. The belief in God, the merciful Father, has constantly been made to serve the purpose of causing or enabling men to forget the Commanding and Jealous God. In such cases religion always lost something essential. A faith which has lost the conception of reverence — for reverence is well aware of the divine wrath — must degenerate in its moral forcefulness. Religion can never dispense with that feeling in which loathing of everything immoral and ungodly is alive, and grips the will. For in the will is born the battling deed, in which piety raises its head, and clears a way for the future.

Here the peculiar and prophetic spirit of Judaism expresses itself once more, namely, that categorical quality of religion, that demand for a decision, which is set before man. All feeling and knowledge, all meditation and illumination, achieve nothing, and fail to give to life its meaning, if man does not "choose life" by making the command of God actual. All experience demands action; and through deed alone does experience become in Judaism religious experience. The deed leads man to God in order to unite him with God; by the deed is the kingdom of God established and extended. Faith and humility are not in themselves pious. They are only the feeling of what God means to us, and therefore so far as the being of man and his personality are concerned, are at first without content; it is the deed which gives them their content. They are a mood, and a mood, especially a religious one, which continues only as a mood, has its dangers, the more so if it claims to be in itself a work of goodness, or in itself to possess religiousness. Humility which is nothing but humility, faith which is nothing but faith, an experience which thus becomes an end in itself, are bad. For man acquires only too readily the habit of occupying himself with his humility and of busying himself with his pious attachment to God. He ruminates over his religious feelings, and in the end creates them

artificially; and the spurious takes possession of faith. This is the direction in which Schleiermacher's conception of religion can tend. From that all important, believing feeling, as he teaches it, there leads a path to that humility which is nothing *but* humility.

The Hebrew Bible too demands self-examination, but means by it simply an attentive calling to mind of the good to which we are summoned, the consciousness that God has set us in our place and that He acknowledges us; it demands the testing of each day according to the measuring stick of duty. "Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord." "Fear God and keep His commandments; for that is the whole being of man." The same idea is found in Goethe's words: "How are we to know ourselves? Never by means of meditation, but by means of action. Try to do your duty, and you will know at once what is in you." It is in the ethical deed that personality reveals itself. All religious introspection which would fain be something else is usually not self-knowledge, but self-conceit, and the humility which is supposed to be proved by it becomes either that pious arrogance, which sees its own "I" irradiated by the glory of God, or that artificial contrition, which bows down very low, though it is, in fact, full of vainest vanity. It is the humility of those who cannot do enough in lowliness before God, in order to be the more self-satisfied and haughty towards their fellow-men, of those who nestle so closely to the Father in heaven, until at last they think that they are sitting in His council. They talk always about the love of God which, without commandment, is yet said to mean and include everything. To worship is indeed easier than to obey. Voluptuous sensitiveness and emotional sentimentality seem to be an adequate substitute for the ethical deed. All this zealous analysis of the believing soul, all this presentation of his own sinfulness and insufficiency, thus become in the end the man's actual "good work", the only piety which he displays.

With true humility it is different: in its relation to the false kind it resembles modesty, the corresponding quality in the relationship of men to one another. To be modest is by no means easy; for in order to be modest one must have already achieved something. In order to become humble and believing, one

must have stood a test, one must have served God. Religiousness embraces both faith and action, and action is often primary, and it provides a basis for faith; the more we do good, the more we grasp the meaning of duty and the meaning of life, the more profoundly we believe in the good and the divine. The more too are we imbued with the feeling of humility — in regard to our deeds as also in regard to the consciousness of having been created, — of our insignificance before God. The moral and morally acting man becomes humble and believing. In this way, but in this way alone, does faith become commanded: "believe thou ever more profoundly in God by ever doing more good!" In the sphere of morality it is the same as in the sphere of knowledge. The more knowledge we acquire, the more we learn how much we do not know. The more good we do, the more urgently obvious it becomes to us how much good there remains to be done, and how far we lag behind the command of God. The service of God is unending; "the day is short, and the task is great".

In his ethical struggles and troubles man realizes the peculiar limitations of his existence which, all too narrowly and soon, set a barrier to his striving after the ideal. In this respect too he realises his place amidst infinity and eternity. Humility is the consciousness of our place in the world; but this our place is not only created for us, but also one which we ourselves are commanded to create. Without reverence, therefore, without knowledge of the commandment, there can be no true humility, no true faith. Only the two together result in self-knowledge, permit us to experience the whole of life and its "I", both secret and duty, profundity and clarity; the two together constitute the religious feeling of life, the feeling of that which is given to us, and of that which we ourselves have to give. Man stands before his God, and in everything he says to God he hears at the same time what God says to him; his prayer always hears simultaneously the commandment, and the consciousness of his duty, on the other hand, is always surrounded by devoutness. The one cannot exist without the other. This simultaneity is also characteristic of monotheistic piety. It gives to man his inner unity and religiousness.



That is why the Hebrew Bible places faith and deed, as a single religious unit, into close juxtaposition with one another. "Keep love and justice, and wait on thy God continually." "Trust in the Lord, and do good." "Wait on the Lord, and keep his way." "Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and put your trust in the Lord." "Let integrity and uprightness preserve me; for I wait on thee." "Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth, who have wrought his justice; seek righteousness, seek meekness." "He has shown thee, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" Humility is put here in this sentence of the Prophet at the end, as the spiritual result of the righteousness and of the love which have been practised, and yet it becomes also the beginning, for it is the humility which never stands still, but walks with God, which not only learns that God is with it, but knows also and as well that it should be with God. Out of the ethical deed arises humility, and it in turn begets the fresh ethical deed.

Human suffering, too, now receives a new and larger answer. Here also are audible the voice of the righteous God and its "Thou shalt", and human resolve answers that voice. Reverence turns towards those great and determining conceptions, which are also closely connected with suffering. For even in suffering the commandment, with its constant demand, enters in: man must be creative, every day must be a service to God — even the day of suffering. Suffering comes, independently of human volition, like everything which is given to, which is sent into, our lives, but man must mould and shape it like a free agent, as indeed he must mould and shape everything which has entered into the sphere of his existence. He is to make the part of his life into which suffering has entered a portion of the kingdom of God; he is to reshape it, surmount it ethically, and so to raise himself here too above mere causality. Just as the certainty which lives in the secret cannot be negated or annihilated by suffering, so also not the meaning of duty. Both are realized in suffering, prayer and commandment, the conviction of being hidden in God and the will to resolve to go forward on one's way. To suffering too the command applies: "Thou shalt love the Lord

thy God... with all thy might." To the ancient teachers its meaning was: "love God with all which He has allotted to you, with happiness as well as with suffering". In good as in bad days man is to be free and creative. To the suffering the exhortation to love God with all one's might speaks with its most insistent tone.

The Rabbis coined a special term for this conception; it describes the prayer of the suffering. It is the term "Zidduk haddin", "the confession of the judgment"; it means the resolve of man to acknowledge in his suffering the command of God; suffering too becomes a confession, an answer which man gives to his God. In this term the stress is laid upon that suffering which means death. Death more than anything else seems to destroy the value of life, and to deny its dignity; it is irrationality, it is negation; meaninglessness seems to clutch at the belief of the man who experiences and sees death. But in full face of it there abides, here too, the "thou shalt" — in spite of all the "thou must" of fate — there abides that moral freedom to which man is elected, this "confession of the judgment", the free, yielding acknowledgment of the commanding God. The term, therefore, acquires its fullest meaning when it is applied to him who, ethically free, chooses death for the sake of the commandment, that is, to the martyr. Of him above all the old Rabbis say that he has made "the confession of the judgment". There is a story about Rabbi Chananya ben Teradyon. When he and his wife were brought, as witnesses of the faith, to the place of execution, they made "confession of the judgment": he began with a passage from the Song of Moses: "The Rock, his work is perfect; for all his ways are judgment", and she continued: "A God of faithfulness and without iniquity, just and right is He." Their daughter, who was also destined for suffering, prayed, as in answer, with the words of Jeremiah: "Great in counsel and mighty in work: for thine eyes are open upon all the ways of the sons of men: to give everyone according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings"; she turned the "He" into "Thou", — the Thou of prayer, for "Thou" implies the answer, the certainty. These sentences, as the classic "confession of the judgment" have found their place in the Jewish prayer-book, and

it has become the custom to repeat them over the coffin when it is brought into the hall of the cemetery before burial.

Resignation becomes thus a part of the service of God. Even where sufferings press hard upon him, man is to continue upon his chosen path; he is not to be content with the straits of affliction. For here, by the great "nevertheless", he can display his resolve to fulfil the commandment; he can furnish the proof of reverence, of creative freedom; here he can rise to the height of human greatness. He not only passively endures suffering — which turns it into sheer misery — but takes it upon himself, and overcomes it. What happens to him ceases to be mere suffering, and is no longer treated as fate; in choice and deed his free personality manifests itself here also, his positive affirmation of life. Thus suffering becomes, as the old Hebrew term has it, a testing, a trial, — an education in the power of overcoming. "Chastisements of love" is the Rabbinic term for this conception; reproof and suffering are here united in *one* word. The Hebrew Bible already indicates the combination. "Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest out of thy law." "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, even as a father the son in whom he delighteth." "It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth." The Book of Job put the idea very clearly. "He delivereth the afflicted through his affliction", is the answer which is given in the speeches of Elihu to all riddles and questions which, in the sufferings of the righteous, seem to contradict the meaning of life. This idea was afterwards adopted by the Talmud. "Him whom the Lord loves He chastens hard in order to purify him." "The glory of God draws near to him who is afflicted." "God raises him whom He afflicts." "Sufferings atone more than sacrifice." "Sufferings are a path of life." "The best which God gave to Israel He gave through suffering."

The man who uttered these last words, Simon ben Yochai, was a "man that had seen affliction by the rod of God's wrath". The same thing may also be said of all those who speak in the same way, and, above all, of the writers of the popular ethical and homiletic literature of the Middle Ages, who so often speak of the blessing of the divine testing; their experience and conduct were at one with their teaching. They are all far from

that easy wisdom which is so well satisfied, because it knows how to endure the large sufferings of others, the ready wisdom of those so prompt to praise the value of sorrow until the time when the first evil day arrives for themselves. The wisdom of Judaism — its very history so devised it — is that of the experience of life, which sees in life a task which has been imposed upon man by God. Suffering is a part of that task; every choosing and creating individual experiences it. He experiences the conflict which gives the tragic element to the will that resolves and fulfils. But he also experiences how the deed, through which he becomes a creator and liberator of his life, dissolves and releases that conflict, transforming the contradiction into unity and harmony.

In these experiences Jewish history found its tragedy, and yet won ever again its significance and its dignity. It is the history of a choice, of a resolve for God, and therefore a history full of suffering. But all the afflictions and problems which the Jewish people encountered on its way, and through the ways of the peoples round about, were never able inwardly to overwhelm its soul. It never became the mere *object* of its various fates; it remained an originator, full of decision, never discouraged spiritually, even in affliction — never merely a sufferer, but always bearing its burden. In a history which only tells of mere happenings, it seems to be just tossed about as a mere object, the play-ball of the nations, and its existence an existence of suffering. In a history which looks to spiritual powers and activities, which seeks for the great conquering ideas, it is a force deciding and carrying out, a personality going its own way, its life a life of fulfilment. From its history there is manifested a great reverence; it possesses its nobility, if true nobility depends upon a unity of inheritance and achievement, of faith and deed, of given growth and free accomplishment. To each individual is assigned by religion such nobility, such a meaning of his existence, this consciousness of his human peculiarity, and this resolve to bring his peculiarity to realization. That which God the creator gave, and that which the Commanding One demands, constitute the life of man. By virtue of this life the years of Judaism, and the years of its suffering, possess a history; secret and commandment endow them with life's assurance and with its dignity.

Love and justice, that which gives and that which commands, are the revelation of God which man experiences. As is expressed in His two old Biblical names, God is at once eternal Being and eternal Goal, Yahweh and Elohim. The old Rabbis interpreted the words thus: the one means eternal love, and the other eternal justice; in God life finds its basis and its path. It is the One and only God who manifests Himself in both aspects; the one never without the other. To concentrate on the one, and to neglect the other, would mean to deprive the revelation of God and our faith in Him of their unity. We cannot find the source of our existence in the One God without seeing our path before us, and we cannot recognize that path without knowing that source; we cannot be humble before the One God without doing good, and we cannot do good without becoming humble. Our confidence tells us that He bears us up eternally, and our reverence tells us that we must be for ever lifting ourselves up towards Him. It is this spiritual unity of both which alone creates unity in us. In the consciousness of being created we experience how our "I" turns to God, saying "Thou", the Thou of trust. In the consciousness that we are to create, we realize how the Godhead reveals its "I", saying to us "Thou", the Thou of the commandment. We call upon God, and He calls upon us; only the two together constitute our whole "I". To apprehend both in one is the essence of Jewish religiousness.

Thus unity has also, therefore, its tension, the tension between the near, which is the source, and the far, which is the goal, and yet these two are one, the One God. There is also the tension between that which is granted and that which is demanded, and these also are one, the life of man, and finally there is the tension between that by which life exists and that by which it *should* exist, and these also are one, the meaning of life. It is the same tension which is characteristic of all religious experience in Judaism, and in which it has its peculiarity, that which distinguishes it from mere mysticism and mere rationalism, both of which lack that polarity, that separateness, which is yet also a unity. Here too unity arises from the contradictory, and certainty from opposition — that certainty concerning value and that yearning for value, that certainty of reality and that yearning for

reality, that unity of secret and answer, of asking and knowing, of doubt and possession, of hoping and having, that endlessness of action and that action of endlessness, that goal which always demands beginning and decision, and only thus becomes the goal, and that beginning for which the goal is always guaranteed, and which only thus becomes beginning and decision, that definite commandment which cannot be without the touch of the far and the absolute, and which only thus reveals itself as the commandment of God, and that tendency to the far and the absolute which cannot be without the definite commandment, and only thus reveals itself as the yearning for God. It is that tension in which life becomes a great yearning, a yearning for action and the action of yearning, with all its tragedy all over again.

The third great paradox of religion now emerges: that God, whose essence is unending love, finds His definite expression also in jealous justice. The old Rabbis interpreted the biblical words to mean: Yahweh is Elohim, and Elohim is Yahweh; "the Lord He is God". Or, to apply the idea to man: our life finds its eternal value in God, and yet without human achievement it is valueless and godless. God gives life, but demands life too. Man is man because God created him, and yet he becomes a human only if he creates his life through the commandment of God. The answer to this is contained in the conception of atonement: that will be expounded in the chapter about man.

Here that optimism, which is the basic problem of Judaism, takes on its clear form. It is the faith in the meaning of life, in the value that is its own, and that it makes its own, in the lasting and in the good, which is its reality and realization. Life has its Whence — "With thee is the fountain of life". It has also its Wherefore — "Man doth not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live". God is aware of every life, God speaks to every life. We can pray to Him, and receive His answer: "I am with thee", "I have heard you." We can serve Him and reply: "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." Our life has its meaning and its purpose; and this meaning and this purpose make it true life. Through them life becomes more than its parts, its days

and its years, and different from them; it becomes a whole and a unity. It has its worship and its task, for it must consist of worship and task. Religion is not merely to give us occasional hours of worship; our whole life is to be filled with worship; God looks down upon us continually. Religion is not to set us single and isolated tasks, but our whole life should be our task; God speaks to us every day. This trust and this reverence give the soul its faith. Religion to Judaism is not an extra something *beside* the world, nor is it a mere addition to existence; its world consists in all which reveals itself to life, and in all which life should reveal. In religion life possesses itself, possesses too its certainty, which tells it of its meaning and its value.

Since the time of the Prophets, it has been the innermost experience in Judaism that religion is the fulfilment of life, its completion. Life finds in it that for which it was intended: its natural growth, its own development, its growth out of the soil of which it was created towards the end for which it was formed. In it man attains himself, the root of his life, the direction of his life, or to express the old Jewish idea in modern phrase: the style of his life. The Prophets and Psalmists tell how the life of man finds its certainty in God, and how through trust in Him it gets its buoyancy and uplift. "Blessed is the man whose strength is in Thee." "But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles." "The Lord God is my strength, and he will make my feet like hinds' feet, and he will make me to walk upon high places." They speak, therefore, also of the poverty of the man who does not know God, of the thirst of the soul which remains far from Him, and which is like the "tree that stands bare in the desert". Above all, they tell of the longing of the heart after the reality of life, of its longing for God. To hunger for God, to thirst for God — "my soul thirsteth for God, for the living God" — that is the wonderful image of the Bible for this yearning of man to go beyond himself, to grow out of all which oppresses him, and would enmesh him, beyond all fettering causality and limitation of the world, beyond the annihilating and consuming meaninglessness of his restrictions, beyond the merely earthly and human elements of his existence, beyond the commonplace

and emptiness of every day, as day follows on day — the yearning to free himself from all the loneliness and anxiety which would envelop him.

The Bible speaks frequently of that loneliness of man; "my lonely one", so the Psalmist calls the yearning soul within him. Loneliness seems to hem man in on every side. Man seems to stand in the midst of the world, in infinite space, in the midst of eternity, in endless time, lost in this infinitude which is ever and everywhere the same — the ancient Hebrew language has only *one* word for world and eternity — whether it freezes him with the immobility of the boundless, or whether it drags him down into the whirlpool of the never-ending. Out of the loneliness with which it alarms him there arises that other loneliness in the midst of an unending fate, amidst the inexorable which encircles us, and the inevitable which follows its fixed course. It is the loneliness of a fleeting, finite life, coerced by causality, that feeling of being forlorn and forsaken, with which the darkness of the infinite, the night of worlds and times and fates, imprisons and crushes man. The heavy darkness of night in which man walks is a frequent biblical image for that feeling. Life without God is lonely darkness, even for a man among other men, with their pleasures and their powers. There is a loneliness of him who has been cast out, or has not been understood, by men, but even greater is the loneliness of him who knows only men, and who feels tied only to the earth, the loneliness of him who is, spiritually, far from all that is real, eternal and sublime. Then is man truly deserted, so that when he begins to awake, to question, and to search, he trembles and despairs.

Out of this fear, the fear of the night of infinity, of the forlornness of that which is merely mortal and human, there springs a yearning, a yearning for the light which illumines all, and in which all is to be found, a yearning for the One, the creator of all endlessness and all eternity, so that the heavens are his heavens, for Him of whom all human life is a revelation, so that the son of earth belongs to Him. The man who has this experience in his seeking, which is also finding, is lifted out of his forlornness; his night is filled with light, and his soul is redeemed from downfall



and despair. "Thou art my lamp, O Lord; the Lord lightens my darkness." "In thy light we see light." He who knows himself to be so intimately bound to the One, the Eternal God, experiences loneliness no longer, and his life is never solitary. With man we only come in touch, intimately and closely though it may be; for every man is alone in his innermost soul as against other men. Every personality is unique upon earth; to be lonely among others is an integral part of individuality. With God we are interwoven, bound up with Him. In Him our life finds its peace. *Peace* — that is one of the words to which Israel gave a fresh meaning. All the struggling or striving of the world makes for restlessness and weariness; it has no goal; it is mere fighting and fatigue; in unity with God man finds his rest, his salvation, his blessing, his peace. "Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. . . . God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever." "Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is." In peace the blessing ends: "The Lord . . . give thee peace." "Peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near, saith the Lord; and I will heal him."

In order to feel the nearness of God our life needs certain intervals for withdrawal from men. In order not to lose ourselves in that real loneliness which is remoteness from God, we must have periods of remoteness from men, periods of loneliness upon earth when the soul is left to itself. After having been with men day after day, we must be with ourselves. In order not to go astray in the world, it is necessary to look into ourselves, and to think of our souls and of God. In the innermost heart of the man who is awakened and yearns there dwells a desire for this loneliness; asceticism has here one of its strongest roots. It is an historical achievement of Israel that through prayer it satisfied this human need, this religious necessity. The purpose of prayer is to leave us alone with God, to lead us away from men, and towards God. It seeks to give us seclusion in the midst of the world. We are to seek loneliness also in the house of God even when it is crowded with men; to be alone there also with ourselves and our God. Our life is to be full of devoutness; therefore from time to time we must leave the ways of the world in

order to drink anew from the spring of devoutness in the peace of God.

This is also the meaning of the Jewish Sabbath, to give to man peaceful hours, hours completely diverted from every-day life, seclusion from the world in the midst of the world. That is why the walls of its statutes were built so high, so that no noise of the workaday world should penetrate into its holy sphere. It was this spirit which endowed the Sabbath with its incomparable poetry, which spread over it a peace which did not merely serve to make a hard and oppressed existence tolerable, but even beautified it with radiant sunshine. It is the day "of delight", the day of "the richness of the soul". Judaism has its Sabbath songs which have become family songs. Everything is expressed in this one fact. "Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage." The present time badly needs a renewal of the old Sabbath. It is, as the Bible expresses it, "the sign between me and the children of Israel", the finger-post which points the way to the ancient God. The fight for the Sabbath is the fight for the consecration of existence, the fight against the increasing secularization of life. Who is so filled with devoutness in his life that he can do without the weekly time of rest in God? And if to so many the struggle of existence does not vouchsafe the Sabbath day, where are they who need to be deprived of Sabbath hours?

Judaism created also certain fixed hours of reverential worship, hours in which the public conscience is allowed to speak, and the Divine will is directed towards men's souls. This custom too of proclaiming and expounding the command of God, and of thus procuring its spiritual revival in him who speaks as well as in him who hears, is one of those gifts with which Israel has enriched mankind. The ethical demand is connected with public worship, and the sermon about that which we ought to be is connected with the glad certainty of that which we are. That which we should perhaps not say to one another — since we are all human beings — may, and indeed must, be pointed out to everybody by the word of God. *We* must be lenient, but the *word of God* has the right to be severe. With its greatness of feeling, with its powerful zeal for that which is right and true, with its blazing fury against baseness and maliciousness, it may rightly oppose

the measured and limited feelings of every-day life which are compressed within the frame of conventionality. The hard and unyielding bluntness of the Hebrew Bible is needed to contradict that weak conventionality which is so easily satisfied with existing compromises, and that suave sagacity, which is only fitted to disguise a lack of character. We need ever again, in contrast with that which judges and governs us in the outside world, the re-awakening of the consciousness that "the Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our Lawgiver, the Lord is our King".

Together with its Sabbath days Judaism created solemn seasons which twine themselves round the year like a holy bond, pointing in various ways to the true meaning of existence, helping to hold our life together, and preventing it from degenerating into a mere succession of days. We must find time for our life, intervals between work, and pauses in our path, in which the meaning of life and its reality can speak to us again. No later time or religion has been able to add anything in regard to the essence and content of the holy days. This or that has been added, so far as external and artistic development are concerned, but nothing to raise the conception. Here too does the creative power of Israel reveal its lasting force.

After all that has been said more than once, it is surely unnecessary to stress the fact that the belief in God did not attain from the very first its final clarity in Israel. It is furthermore unnecessary to state explicitly that the height attained is not the less significant on account of its having had to be climbed. It is the task of the history of religion to expound the different sections of this path, this progressive fulfilment. This one fact may be stressed: the clear indication that even in the patriarchal period a certain new type of religion arose, and that a purer knowledge of God began to take shape through Moses. All those who came after him hark back to him. He is the "father of all the prophets".

All religion is an attempt to express in various ways that which is essentially inexpressible. Every new religion has to create its new language. The precision of language, however, follows but very slowly the distinctness of thought. The latter may have already found distinct clearness without the word being able to

convey a corresponding expression. Or the word may prove its symbolical power, by means of which it goes beyond itself and conveys more than it actually says. Hence, specially as regards the Hebrew Bible, it leads to fallacies, if the power and range of an outstanding idea, the soul of the words, are neglected, and instead the mere words themselves, the mere body of the idea, are measured and reckoned up. This happens only too often, and it takes place frequently for the sake of a materialism, which boasts of an understanding of biblical sentences only when it has pressed out of them their lowest possible meaning. It is surprising what hairsplitting and want of judgment are applied to transforming the most sublime passages into commonplace, poetry into the most prosaic prose, and what is characteristic into banality. They who look at these matters with a particular object and tendency can naturally see even in the noblest utterances only traces of the earthly clay which may still cling to them.

This procedure has been especially applied to the name which is used most frequently for God in the Bible: *Yahweh*. It may originally, and even for a considerable time, have denoted one God beside other gods, but in the end it came to designate the *One* God, who is the *only* One, and of whom all nations are to say: "Only in thee is God; and there is none else; there is no other God." From the time of Deutero-Isaiah, at any rate, *Yahweh* is no longer a proper name, which distinguishes one god from another, but it signifies "God", "the Lord", with all its symbolism, with all its uniqueness of secret and certainty, the nameless name, as it were, and therein alone it gets meaning anew. If, nevertheless, modern translations of the Hebrew Bible, in all those passages where the unity and uniqueness of God are clearly recognized and declared, do not speak of the love and righteousness of *God*, or of the Eternal, but of the love of *Yahweh*, the righteousness of *Yahweh*, and the holiness of *Yahweh* — is this not stripping the biblical word of its spiritual meaning? Only pedantry or complacency can, for instance, make the Psalmist pray: "O *Yahweh*, thou hast searched me, and known me", "*Yahweh* guard thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth and for ever more", or make the pious Job say, "*Yahweh* gave, and *Yahweh* has taken away; blessed be the name of

Yahweh." In such a translation the words of the Hebrew Bible lose their peculiar character.

But in quite another and more essential respect too, the importance of the One God, promulgated by the Prophets, Psalmists and Sages of Israel, has been misunderstood, sometimes even within Judaism itself. There have been justified complaints that Judaism has sometimes betrayed a certain "free thinking laxity" in regard to the idea of God. Some Jewish people seem to hold the opinion that Judaism is completely contained in the ethical commandments which it teaches; they see in the belief in God a mere ornamental extra. A grosser superficiality could not possibly be inflicted upon the Jewish religion. It is true that Judaism assigns the highest value to the moral deed, that it describes God always in moral attributes, and that to it the God of faith is the God of the moral law. But in the Jewish religion there are no ethics without belief in God, no fulfilment of duty which does not become a service of God; it is in God that morality has its foundation and its guarantee.

Faith in God is to Judaism in no wise a mere part of religion, it is the source of its life, it is the knowledge of reality. The decision which Judaism demands is not merely ethical, but religious, the decision of a faith, of a conviction, the decision for the One God. The essential nature of its ethics and its morality consists in this: that they are the command of God. It does not recognize the finite life with its obligations and statutes — that is mere moralism; it discovers and experiences the meaning of existence in faith in One God, it apprehends life in its connection with the One, the Lord, so that the restrictions of life become its service. Thus only do we get religion, the *religion* of morality; only thus do ethics become the ethics of *religion*, the law of God. The clear, definite law, which in mere morality only knows limitation, expands here into the infinite. The finite life enters into eternity, and the field of the commandment into the world of worship. The mystery of origin unites itself with the certainty of the way, and faith unites itself with the moral law, so as to give life its unity and religiousness. The character of Judaism lies in the fulness of its faith in God, which admits of no ambiguity or faltering, no halting on two feet, but demands open and clear

confession. The degree in which this consciousness pervades the whole is the measure of men's spiritual belonging to Judaism.

It was for the One God, the creating and commanding One, that the martyrs of Judaism went to their death; it was for their God that thousands, as witnesses of truth, cast away their worldly possessions, forsook homeland and home, accepted degradation and persecution. The belief in God gives the history of Judaism its meaning, its heroic significance. He alone, who sees the source and destination of his existence in the One and Only God, has experienced his Judaism. He alone is truly a Jew who, in the face of eternity, when the soul hears itself called to its God, when it is embraced by the awe of the infinite, is able to pronounce, as the outcome and confession of his life, the words which were shaped by the genius of Israel for the hours of decision and of departure: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One."

## FAITH IN MAN FAITH IN OURSELVES

Out of faith in God springs faith in man. We were created, just as everything else was created, by God; we live through God and in God, but as free and independent beings, called upon to act ethically. Here Judaism separates itself from any pantheistic religion of salvation, and from mere mysticism, which finds God in everything and everything in God, to both of which creator and creation are as one. We are free and independent, but not entirely separated and cut off from God, not simply outside Him — here Judaism distinguishes itself from any deistic religion of "moralism", and also from rationalism, which know only a distant God, who is removed beyond the reach of the seeking heart, and is only conceived as an idea of the mind. Judaism is neither a religion without commandment nor a religion without mystery. Its God is neither the merely transcendent God, who is only above us and outside us, nor the merely immanent God, who dwells in all things and beings. Neither this world alone nor the world beyond alone, with all their abstract logic, provides for Judaism the truth of religion. It is the unity of both which gives to

Jewish faith in God its special essence; out of it can grow up the faith in man, so that man may realize that he is the child of God.

Thus Jewish faith about man is moulded by that tension and paradox which are so characteristic of Jewish religiousness. We stand *opposite* God — and it is upon this opposition between God and man that all religion in Judaism is, in the first instance, based; God is the creator, the Holy One, the Different One, separated from all that is mortal and human. But there is something in us which links us, and our freedom too, to God, which comes from Him, goes to Him, and remains in Him; all faith in Judaism is faith in a relationship with God; God grasps us and calls to us, and our nature can strive upwards to Him continually. Our life has its *this* world, its “here”, its binding place on earth, and it has also its *that* world, its “there”, its emancipating and redeeming call and strain towards the Eternal. It has its earthly existence, and that which points beyond that existence, and raises it upwards. It is a fact, a limited and fixed fact, and it is also a task and a yearning, a task which leads into the Infinite, and a yearning which soars up to the Eternal. Our souls are most personal possession; they separate us from everything else, and are exclusively our own, and yet in them lies our element of eternity, that which is common to all individuals, and out of which all that is individual has to emerge. The soul is the expression of the personal, — of that which is most immediate; and yet, as the Jewish religious philosophers say, it is the mediator between man and his God. It is the Divine within us, derived from God and interwoven with Him: here lies the root of the *mystical* element which belongs to all religion. And yet the soul is also that in us which is most human, the free originator of human destiny; here lies the root of the *ethical* element, which gives to religion that which belongs to it. There is a covenant between man and God, a covenant between freedom and eternity, a unity which lives in the opposition between the two. That which religion grants and reveals is in Judaism not only an idea concerning man with its postulate, and not merely the destiny of man with its myth. It gives *faith in man*.

In order to describe this nature of man, the Bible says: Man was created in the image of God. We can also express it thus:

man is the especial revelation of God, related to Him, not only the man of the world, but the man of God. His "I" finds in God its source and its goal; God is the "I" and the "Thou" of man. In his individuality, in his personality, and in his life, man is able to develop the Divine; it is given to him that he may make it appear. His life goes from God to God, created in the image of God, appointed to be that image. This, like all that is said by Judaism about God, is but a metaphor. But it is an undying metaphor, inexhaustible in its meaning, an image which can be used again and again — though it may be that he who first created it, and many generations which accepted it from him, did not fully realize all that it contains. With it there was won an everlasting symbol, a principle of humanity, which gives to the religious and ethical conception of "man" the conception of human dignity. However great the differences between man and man, their creation in the image of God is characteristic of, and common to, them all; it is this likeness which causes man to be man, and designates him as human being. God's covenant was made with all human beings, as with all worlds. Not this one or that one was created in the image of God, but every man as such was so created; for therein lie the reason and the meaning of all human existence. Every human being is "a child of God", which is another Biblical expression for being created in the image of God. He is so by virtue of his being human, and for the sake of his being human. What is greatest is contained in everybody; in what is essential and determining all are equal. Place and task are assigned to all; nobility resides in everyone. To deny it to *one* would mean to deny it to all. Above all delimitation of races and nations, of castes and classes, of masters and servants, of givers and receivers, and also beyond all delimitation of talents and powers, man stands assured. Every being who bears the face of man was created and chosen to be a revelation of human dignity.

It is impossible to emphasize the unity of the human race more distinctly and decisively. The connection between this idea and the assertion of man being created in the image of God is already indicated in the Bible. Immediately after the story of the beginning of the human race there follows the enumeration



of all the peoples of the earth, — the “seventy nations”, — in order to prove them to be branches of one great tree; the nations became diverse and separate, but the original and essential thing is their unity. Thus it is only Israel which knows in ancient times of an aggregate of all human beings, of one great family upon earth. This idea was inherent in monotheism; the division and separation of the children of earth correspond with the many gods of polytheism; with the *One God* is posited *one mankind*. This conception was also contained in the idea of the historic mission of Israel: the mission to all is based upon the ideal unity of all. But this unity undoubtedly has its strongest root in man’s likeness to God, in the idea that all men, having been created in the image of God, are therefore the children of God. If new assurance accrued from this quarter and from that to this conviction, it is, nevertheless, indubitable that it is an original creation of Judaism. Jewish soil bore the knowledge of one humanity, of the unity of the world in which the commandment is to be fulfilled, of the world, which, fact becoming task, *becomes* a unity.

The understanding of mankind as a whole, and the understanding of man as an individual, are always in the same proportion. If the human is understood, in its originality and givenness, in its depth and in its eternal purpose, then the same qualities are found in all individuals, in each one the whole. If all are the same in essence, then each one stands for all. If the one world, which is the world of all men, is understood, then is also the world of every individual understood. What unites mankind gives to each individual man his possession. As creation in the image of God guarantees the unity of humanity, so it also gives to each individual his own individual right, and secures the separate value of every human soul. It is indeed characteristic of all religions that they lift the individual out of the great multitude. This is most distinctly pronounced in the most childlike faith: *cura pii dis sunt*. In all who pray this anthropocentric standpoint will always be preserved. He who prays feels himself the centre of the world. Even here there is something peculiar to Judaism: that man does not approach one particular god out of many, but that he comes before the One, the Holy One, the creator of heaven and earth. But the most important and peculiar

thing which Judaism gave to man, that wherein man obtains an incomparable possession, the ethical consciousness of his own self, the dignity of human personality, is this doctrine of having been created in the image of God. By virtue of it he possesses the spiritual sign of the Divine and the free; his personality rises here out of the deepest and the ultimate; it bears witness to that which he is by the grace of God. If man is indeed the child of God, then every soul has its eternal meaning; there are no human masses, only the human being, who is a human being by the will of God. Every soul is, by virtue of its very nature, a world in the universe. As the Talmud says: "Every human being is equal in worth to the whole world." "Know that for your sake the world was created." The phrase concerning the "one soul in Israel" was based upon this teaching. "He who preserves a soul in Israel has preserved a world with its fulness", for he has preserved a human being.

Every human being is thus taken to be something unique, a personality; and for every one is acknowledged the permanent value of his individuality; everybody is, according to the ancient saying, "coined for himself". He is, in his separate distinctness, a revelation of God. We are not to show respect for the mighty or for the multitude; we are to show respect for man as such, even the poorest and most insignificant, be it ourselves or others. We are to trust not only the good and the noble, but all who carry a human soul within them. We are to have faith in ourselves and in every one: for we are all created in the image of God. This is the highest that can be said about the significance and value of man, and no nobler nobility can be attributed to him. One of the old Rabbis rightly saw in this doctrine the most essential creation of his religion: "Simon ben Asai said, 'This is the book of the generations of man: in the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made He him' — in this sentence is contained the essence of the Torah."

This sentence comprises the essence of the Torah all the more because in this promise is also expressed the demand, and in this pledge is expressed the task. To be a child of God implies the whole of the commandment; it is, so to say, the chief injunction of all the commandments. For the greater the gift, the more

comprehensive the responsibility which results from it. In the incomparable significance of our life lies its illimitable destiny: you are divine, so prove yourself to be divine. That man was *created* in the image of God means, then, also that the highest may be *demand*ed of man. In the ethical field every man is to be a creative artist. The ethical task is the task of all men. The Bible gave to this doctrine its classical expression: "Ye shall be holy: for I the Lord your God am holy." That is the highest ideal which can be put before man: to become more and more like God.

The power of realization, the power of creation, in the highest sense, are therewith assigned to man. All that is useful in existence, all the works of power and advantage, are produced by man. But it is in the good deed that man becomes a creator and a sculptor, and with it he introduces into the world, into his own world, and into that of the universe, a manifestation of the infinite and the eternal. The good deed springs from the peculiar originality of man, and everything which emanates from what is truly his own may be called a creation. This spiritual gift of creation is also called in Judaism the *purity of the soul*. The ancient prayer, which forms the introduction to the Jewish prayer-book, and in which the peculiar voice of Judaism has constantly been recognized, opens thus: "My God, the soul which Thou hast given me is pure, Thou didst create it, Thou didst breathe it into me." The creative element is pure and free; that which has merely grown or come to be is earthly and bound. The purity of the soul, with the power of creation, was given to man by God; it is the ruling principle of his life; he was created with it and for it, so that he might be a creator. Through it he can win freedom by the doing of good; the good deeds which he does are the exaltation, the liberation, the realization, of his life; they are the redemptive element in his existence. The source of the creative quality lies in purity; purity is the secret, and in freedom lies the path of the creative element; freedom determines man's destiny: because of freedom can come demand. Out of the certainty of the secret and of purity grows the certainty of what is definite, the certainty of freedom and its commandment. If we probe profundity and origin, we experience purity; if we

realize direction and path, end and purpose, we experience freedom. Freedom is the task which man is to fulfil, which he is able to fulfil because of the purity of his soul, created by God. Freedom is no gift of divine grace; nothing ready made which is allotted to man and changes his nature. It is the great commandment of his life; as an old Rabbinic saying runs, Freedom is that which was written on the two tables on Sinai. It is that which man is to bring into existence all his life and in order that he may truly live, so that his life may become reality, that through which his nature creates his nature. "Ye shall therefore keep my statutes and my judgments: which if a man do, he shall live by them: I am the Lord."

Thus self-reverence enters into the life of man. In his life appears that which constitutes his life, but which is, at the same time, greater than his life, that which reveals his humanity, his most human quality, and which is yet divine; in his existence, which is a created existence, appears this creative power; in the conditioned the unconditioned. And this exalted and creative element is the ethical, the demanding, element, arising in the midst of that which is given, the leading and liberating element in the midst of an existence limited and bound. His life is a life which has happened to come to him, and yet it is to become a different life; for it is to be holy, and to be holy means to be different, different from all that is merely earthly and merely human. By its freedom it is to be carried beyond itself. Man is appointed to be a lawgiver in relation to his life, even as God is. That feeling of man who is free towards the ethically superior and the ethical command is reverence: reverence we can feel intensely towards ourselves, towards our own nature, but not humility, which is a feeling of the created being, and which we can experience, therefore, only towards God. We learn about the place of our freedom, that place of *ours*, from which we are to advance into the infinity and eternity of duty, ever resolving and ever beginning afresh. Few voices resound so strongly through Judaism as this voice of reverence, ever demanding anew. The path we are to tread remains always our path; it has its absolute and its endless direction. We are to be holy, as the Lord our God is holy.

An eternal striving, a realization and development without end, is here imposed upon man, something which is to be fulfilled. The measurement whereby he is measured is the highest possible; he is measured in relation to God. Herein is Judaism separated from the attitude of antiquity and especially from that of the Greeks. That man in his virtue should strive towards God, elevating himself ethically to the divine level, is remote from Greek wisdom, quite apart from the fact that the Greek God does not exhibit the ethical ideal. "Strive not to be like Zeus." This phrase of Pindar stands, as it were, at the entrance to Greek religion. Hence a religious seeking to rise constantly higher is wanting to ethical endeavour. A certain self-satisfaction is peculiar to the classical conception of life; it is not conscious of falling far short of the ideal, of a holy discontent, because it is lacking in the idea of absolute duty. We may compare the true Hellenism of the dying Julian, "I die without repentance, just as I have lived without guilt", with the story of the death of Moses, or with the sentence in the book of Job, "Behold, he putteth no trust in his holy angels". To the religion of Israel the good is without end. "One duty creates the other." The ethical law, with its unending "thou shalt", stands before man and demands his life, so that it may become part of this endlessness; at the head of the commandment addressed to him stand the words: "I am the Lord, your God!" Man's ethical consciousness is the consciousness of an endless task, which is also *his* task; it becomes reverence towards himself, and reverence towards his life.

But man has only his finite capacities wherewith to achieve this infinite task. "The day is short, and the work is great." Man will always lag behind the ideal. No human being can ever have done fully what he ought to have done. As an example of pseudo-religiousness the Talmud describes the "pious one", who, in his self-righteousness, says: "I have done all that was imposed upon me; name to me what more I have to do." In face of the demand to be holy, even as God is holy, complete fulfilment is never possible; the claim of having done even *more* than was commanded is still more absurd. Before God — so it is repeated in Jewish teaching and prayer — there is no merit. Striving and struggling

human beings we can be; we are never finished, complete, or perfect. "It is not granted to you to complete the work, nor are you entitled to withdraw from it."

In self-reverence is also manifest the tension which is so peculiar to all Jewish religiousness, the tension shown in the fear of God and in the love for Him, in humility towards God and in confidence reposed in Him, the tension between the Near and the Far, between close possession and distant aloofness. The goal which is put before man is the Far, and the way he has to go is the Near, and yet there is no way without goal, and no goal without the way. The ethical is the task which is brought into our life, and yet every ethical task is without completion, removed ever again further into the Far. Our place is a finite one, but the command which is enjoined upon us is endless, and yet there is no place without command, and no command without man's place in which he can fulfil it. It is the same tension as that between purity and freedom, between the reality and the realization of life. Only because the soul is pure, and because it possesses divinity and real existence, is it free and able to *realize* its life and its divinity, and yet only if it becomes free and realizes its life, does it *possess* purity and *possess* its life. Purity is given to us, and is in us; it is our spiritual reality, the very birth of our soul, and freedom is demanded of us; it is set before us that we may realize it, that it may grow up with the soul's growth. Thus does what is peculiarly our own become ever again the goal, and yet again the goal constitutes the "I", and is our own. So with the tension comes anew this inward yearning, the yearning of the pure for freedom, and the yearning of the free for purity, that possessing which is always a search, after the infinite, and that search which is conscious of its possession — its possession in the infinite. Here again the Near cannot be without the Far, or the Far without the Near. The life which man chooses is his way, the way which is to lead to God, the eternal way of the infinities, but it is the way which starts with man and begins with each human life, with each of its hours. Thus here again we find life with its tension and its yearning.

The third great paradox of faith reveals itself here in all its decisiveness: the contrast between our significance and our

limitation, between the ideal and the actual within our existence, between the trust in ourselves, granting to us the greatest, and that selfreverence which sees in us something small in comparison with something greater; it is a contrast with all a contrast's conflict, as also with its discord. We are called to the Highest, and yet are never able to reach it. We are always to believe in ourselves, and yet we are never able fully to do so. Or, to express this idea conceptually: the good is immanent, it is the possession and strength of the soul; but it is also transcendent, the endless task of the soul. God created us in His image, and we are the children of God: such is the true reality of our lives; and yet, after all, it is only the goal, the very distant goal, that we may become like unto God and children of God. We are to be holy, but no holy one exists upon earth. Even Moses erred, and his life was forfeited because of his sin. The contradiction that religion promises us an inviolable value, and yet continually demands of us an unattainable value, seems thus to take hold of our life, to grip it with its tragedy.

This is the last, the final, paradox of religion. The first was that of created man with its opposing feelings that God is the very far One, He who dwells on high, holy, apart from all that is human, and yet that He is the Present One, the God of my heart, profoundly connected with all that is human; that He is the Unfathomable, the Ineffable One, and yet that He is the source of my life, the cause of my certainty, the Eternal from whom all life is derived. The other paradox, more far reaching, was that of human freedom, the contrast between man's createdness and his being, nevertheless, a creator, between his having been brought into the world, and his being, nevertheless, independent, bound by his origin, and yet free to choose his path, between the fact that his life is fixed and determined, and is, nevertheless, to be chosen and to be determined, — given, and yet commanded. The last paradox is that concerning the worth of man, — that life, having been created by God, contains an eternal quality, a lasting meaning, and yet that, since we men are to create it, life would remain, without this our deed, within the sphere of mortality, empty and meaningless. Life has a divine quality, and yet this very divine quality has to be realized; life is a creation

of God, and yet needs man's deed before it can become the kingdom of God, for it is the life of man who is to *become* holy. In this last contradiction both the others are interwoven and contained. The paradox of the divine nearness and farness, as man, aware of his createdness, experiences them, enters into the paradox of his freedom, so that his action too experiences the presence as well as the exaltedness of God, the one in the task of his life, and the other in its purpose; he feels the ethical nearness and farness of existence. The covenant of God with man, and the covenant of man with God, the secret of origin and the clearness of commandment, are fused together in the combined secret and clearness of human life. There dwells in life a most convinced certainty and the most rigid limitation. A unity ensues from the contrast, a religious reality, therefore, and not a philosophical postulate; not a mere dogmatic utterance, but the faith of man.

That which is expressed in this third paradox becomes more accentuated by reason of the fact that Judaism emphasizes the continuous personal responsibility of man, the account he has to render to God. The thought of confession before God and of self-examination before Him constantly brings the impossibility of the ideal before the mind. The commanding God is the Judging, the Omnipresent and Omniscient One, the God of truth. Man in his freedom stands before Him. God is "the judge of all the earth", "who regards no person, and takes no bribe". The Lord "searches the heart and tries the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings". "Whither shall I go from thy spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy presence?" This thought gets its expression in Rabbinic literature: "You are judged every day." "Know what is above you: an eye which sees, an ear which hears, and all your deeds are recorded in a book." "He is God, He is the Fashioner, He is the Creator. He knows; He is Judge, He is Witness, He is accuser; He will judge." The beginning and the end of life, birth and death, are to remind us of the judgment: "Know whence you came, and whither you go, to whom you have to render account, and to whom you are responsible." To believe that there is "no judgment and no judge" is reckoned as the root



of all sin. This idea of responsibility towards God became the sermon for the passage of the years, the idea underlying the festival of the New Year. This festival received its peculiar character, which it has kept to our own time, by becoming the "Day of Judgment", the day on which the soul feels anew the duty of confession to God.

It is the commandment of commandments that we are to test our activities afresh by the calling which God has appointed for us all. The demand which is sent forth to all human life thus receives its standard, the standard of that which is never ended, never accomplished; man's task acquires its range and seriousness; the task is each man's personal and individual life's task. Man becomes the judge of his own life; he pronounces judgment according to the command of God; he is raised above regard for the opinion of his fellows. His freedom is that of the fear of God; it enters upon infinity and eternity. His self-knowledge becomes an outlook upon the ideal. This ideal is the ideal of action; it is no mere enlightenment of the understanding; this self-knowledge is, therefore, a test of the path of man with its constant beginning and its constant opening out into the beyond; it is no peace of the soul which is satisfied to know itself, but in it is an urgent impulsion towards movement, the admonition to ever fresh beginning and ever new decision. In it lives the reverence for the Divine. It is the self-knowledge of the free man, who is aware of his freedom, and experiences in it the absoluteness of the commandment; it is more than the self-knowledge of him who experiences only his createdness and his complete dependence; it is the knowledge of the path, and not only of the place. It is the path of God which is assigned to man.

Thus does man stand at the judgment-seat of God, — the God before whom he cannot stand. Every duty of our life, from the greatest to the smallest, is the commandment of God; we are always in debt to God. We continue in debt to God; that is the human side of our nature, its earthly side, that is the doom of our freedom, its aspect of createdness; it is the paradox of the commandment. But human independence, this gift of the way, can also produce guilt and doom; it can become the opposite of freedom, the unfree freedom of fate. Man makes himself guilty

by opposing that which God demands, not merely lagging behind it, by abandoning or rejecting the commandment of God, thus turning away from the freedom in which his origin and his purity are to find their realization. His deed turns away from God, and denies the way which leads from man to Him; it becomes opposed to God, disowning and aimless, or as the Bible calls it, *Sin*. It removes him from God, he becomes separate, without direction, solitary. His is then not that solitude which is implied in all human nature, or that higher solitude in which the soul comes to itself and finds its Creator, but it is the loneliness, the isolation and homelessness of him who loses and abandons himself, who has withdrawn and estranged himself from his origin and his purity. The life of the soul is now no longer development and fulfilment no longer growth; that which does not belong to it, that which is strange and impure, enters into its existence. Sin, so the Bible teaches, is uncleanness, apostasy, not creation but death, a sinking and disappearing of life. In sin life is simply fate, something conditioned, and man becomes the object of his fate, his own object. "His iniquities make the sinner a prisoner, and he is held in the bonds of his sin."

It is *his* sin. He took possession of fate, and thus made it his own. God had "set before him life and good, death and evil". For Judaism there is no sin in itself, but only man's sin, the *sin of the individual*. Judaism knows nothing of the myth of sin, that myth of fate — its prophets destroyed the rudiments of such a myth — nothing of original sin, the advent and coming to be of *sin*, of which man is effect and object. Sin is a fate which the individual man prepares for himself by disowning himself, and by making of himself a mere object. He does not fall into the sin of fate, but into his fate of sin. "*Your sin*", "*you have sinned*", "*the soul which sinneth*" — that is how the Hebrew Bible speaks to man. Yet all that, which through sin, takes hold of man, and spins its webs around him, is not forgotten. Judaism, too, is not silent about that which belongs to all humanity; it does not seek to conceal the shortcomings and deficiencies of man's nature. It says again and again that all life is a lagging behind; it speaks also of temptation, of "the evil inclination", of the "desire of sin unto man". It knows of the connections and the interlacings of

life, of its inheritances and dependences, of all that grows up out of the soil in which man is planted, and of that which stands before the door of his existence. It knows of evil habits, of the movements of evil, of the freezing and stiffening of the heart, of the sin which creates sin, it speaks of "the iniquity of the fathers" and of "the iniquity of the land". But it knows nothing of an evil which is necessarily given with human nature. It knows no original or inherited sin. The word "sin" in Judaism is not a word of fate, but a word of judgment, of judgment concerning human action. Man, who can be for or against God, creates sin, which remains in the sphere of his responsibility. He commits it, and becomes thus the victim of his own deeds, or, as it is also put, punishment befalls him as the consequence of what he has done. The commanding, judging God is the punishing God.

All the more decisively does the question of faith arise. Man stands before God, but how *can* he stand before God? In us is the Divine and the real; but does not our sin separate us from God, from the source of all that is real? We are the children of God; but do we not cease to be so if godlessness, if sin, takes hold of us, so that we belong to it? Our soul is pure, but can it not become unclean, if it becomes unfree, if it subjects itself to evil and to destruction, and thus loses its world? Cannot then a cleft be opened between man and his God, so that there is no longer a way from man to God and from God to man? The answer to this is contained in a conviction which has been acquired by the Jewish soul, so that the conflict is surmounted, and leads to unity. This is the conviction of "return" and of the atonement which return brings about.

Man *can* "return": that is the significance of this conviction; that is the interpretation which it restores to life. Man can return to the commandment and to the origin of his life, to his freedom and purity; he can get back to the reality of his life, and is thus always able to return to God. If he has sinned, he is always able to become different; he is able to find his way back to that Other, to the Holy, to that which is more than earthly, and more than the limitations of life; he can hallow and purify himself again, he can make atonement. He can make fresh decisions, and begin anew. An ever new beginning is vouchsafed to the life of man;

for him a beginning remains a constant ethical possibility, his ethical possession. The task of choice and realization, of freedom and its deed, is never ended. "Return!" thus in Judaism does life speak to men throughout their lives — "return", and not, as ignorance has misinterpreted, "do repentance". "Return one day before your death." This return, this *Teshubah*, is the atonement of which man is never bereft, and in which the life of man is ever able to renew itself.

Such a revelation of life has been the experience of Judaism: the way ever remains open, the way which was granted to man, and the way which was demanded of him, the way from God to man, and the way from man to God. We have deviated from it, and have gone astray, but it still exists, leading to us and leading from us. The covenant between God and man is an eternal covenant; it endures. We have estranged ourselves from it and have profaned ourselves, and yet we remain the creatures of God, created by Him in order that we may ourselves create. Our life has received its secret and its commandment from God; it has its eternal source and its eternal goal. Even if we have sinned against God, this its source with its secret, and this its goal with its commandment, remain for us and for our lives. By sin was life negated and torn asunder; it was brought into conflict with itself. But the power of affirmation and unity has been implanted in us; our soul was given to us; and it can always become again "unified" and single. We disowned ourselves, but that which is our own endures. We are not dominated by fate; our sin is not sin, but *our* sin, we committed it, and we can "return", return to our origin and our calling, to the meaning of our life. The guilt of sin and the oppression of sin are not a tragedy of fate, but a tragedy of the human will, which grows out of purity, and should ripen in freedom, which seeks through sin to loose itself from its root, and yet never can be detached from that root, which tries through sin to become crooked and bent, and is yet ever able to stand upright and erect. It is *man's* sin, and man can therefore return to himself. Root and way, purity and freedom, remain.

In the certainty of atonement are contained both profundity and assurance, the certainty of that which God will ever be for

man, and of that which man should ever be before God. Both are here experienced equally: that man is the creature of God, and never ceases to be so, and that he ought to be creative, and is always able to start again being creative. The two religious, fundamental experiences of Judaism are here united; the eternal enters into the human, and the human into the eternal. All atonement is the atonement of the finite with the infinite, the overcoming of the Far by the Near. As a Rabbinic utterance concerning atonement, trying to explain the words of the Bible, says: "It is thine, O God, and it is ours; for thus the prophet prayed: 'Turn thou us unto thee, O Lord, and we shall be turned!' and thus hast thou commanded: 'Return unto me, and I will return unto you!'" Rabbi Akiba fused these conceptions into a brief confession of faith, wherein he sought to express the essential individuality of his religion: "Happy are ye, O Israelites; before whom do you purify yourselves, and who purifies you? Your Father in heaven!"

Both parts of this sentence are experienced with equal strength. First is felt that which the knowledge of the source of his life makes clear to man. Our life retains its significance, even when we would throw away its vocation. What was given by God can never be taken away, even if we become unfaithful in regard to that which God demanded of us. God is the near God, the present God, even if sin has removed man from Him. Man was created by God; he was made in the likeness of God, and in spite of all he remains the child of God. He remains so by virtue of his origin, though he may belie the fact by his deeds. Rabbi Meir expressed the idea of atonement thus: "You are children of the Lord, your God, even if you do not act as children of God."

Our life, so Judaism teaches, comes from the One and Only God, and though He is the Commanding, Judging and Punishing God, He is also the God of love, the God to whom we remain bound. He is our God even if we have sinned, and therefore our sin is not the only deciding factor to Him. "Not according to our sins does He deal with us, nor does He requite us according to our guilt." The covenant of God with man is never broken. To quote a passage of the Talmud: "God, as it were, says, 'I am the same before man sinned, and after man sinned', and that is why

Moses exclaimed twice, "The Lord, the Lord!": we sinned, we went astray, yet God remained the same." An old Rabbi spoke consolingly to the sinners who trembled because of the divine retribution. "If you appear before God, do you not appear before your Father in heaven?" God remains near to us, even if we have turned aside from Him, and strayed from His path, and if our sin removed us from Him. The jealous and punishing God never ceases to be the loving God, or as the Prophet tries to express the paradox: "God remembers mercy even in His wrath." So it was said in the old legends about the Israelites: their sin removed and drove them away from God, and yet God went with them. Thus too sang one of the Jewish poets of the Middle Ages, Solomon Ibn Gabirol: "I flee from Thee to Thee"; sin drives man away from God, but even in his wandering he remains united with God, banished from God, and yet sheltered by Him, fleeing from Him unto Him. The far God remains our God, the near God; we are always with Him, and He is always with us.

All the Biblical words about the divine love and goodness, about His mercifulness and graciousness, now assume this new personal tone, — a tone of pity and forgiveness, of long-suffering and forbearance. God "forgives iniquity and transgression and sin", He is "good and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon Him". He allows Himself "to be found" even by him who has sinned. He raises man up, consoles him, and accepts him. All His exaltedness reveals itself in this exaltedness of forgiveness, this endless pardoning. As the Talmud says: "It is God's greatness that He is patient and long-suffering towards the wicked." If in man there is a yearning towards the divine compassion, a yearning for the nearness of God, a reaching out towards the Infinite, a hopeful questioning, in this yearning there lives now something new, the desire for the Forgiving God, for the Infinite Forgiving God, a searching for the knowledge of Him, a yearning for atonement. It is the homesickness of the soul which here finds expression, the soul's yearning for its purity and its freedom — not a yearning for redemption from earth and earthly existence, but a yearning for atonement, for that forgiving and liberating certainty of possessing

in this earthly existence the nearness of God and the source of life. In this yearning the loneliness with which sin enshrouds the soul dies away; only he who is without yearning is utterly alone. All that tragedy of human existence, which feels itself fettered, and which has always to battle with estrangement and negation, which is exposed to the evil as well as to the good, now finds an atoning answer; it knows that it is placed in the field of the earthly, but that it is not confined to, and finished by, the earthly. God comes before man and says to him: "I have pardoned." Man's life maintains its origin.

But it must maintain its path as well. Just as it emphasizes the nearness of God, so Judaism emphasizes also His commandment, the duty of human responsibility, and it is just here that the Jewish idea of atonement is special and peculiar. Man is to return. "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." Atonement is here no mere act of grace, a miracle of salvation, which befalls the chosen, but it demands the human being, it demands his ethical decision, his free choice and deed. It has its own path which begins with man. Even in atonement "thou shalt" confronts him, in it too are spoken the commanding words: "I, the Lord, am thy God." Man is not granted something without condition; he has rather to decide for something without condition. His deed is the beginning of atonement. Atonement is the atonement of creative man. As the Talmud expresses it: "To us who have sinned the *commanding* God speaks first, and only when we have listened to Him, does He speak to us as the God of love; therefore it is said in the psalm: 'The Lord is just in all his ways, and loving in all his doings', first just, and then full of love." Love begins with the return of man.

The relationship between man and God is thus given here too with ethical immediacy, and religiousness is given its free, personal and reverential elements. The sinner is himself to turn towards God, since it is he who has turned himself away from Him; it was *his* sin, and it must be his return, his conversion. Nobody can be a substitute for him in this return, nobody can take it away from him, nobody can atone for him, or justify him,

nobody can demand from God atonement for him. Nobody stands between him and God, no mediator or past event, no redeemer and no sacrament. He himself must purify himself, in order again to become pure; he must make himself free, after he has made himself unfree. Before him lies the path which he must follow. Faith and trust alone are, therefore, not sufficient or adequate, nor is believing confidence in God, and still less a believing reliance upon a salvation already achieved. Here again we can only believe if we do what is incumbent upon us. Atonement too is *ours*, our task and our way. It is this which, in contrast with Paul's gospel of redemption, became the distinguishing characteristic of Judaism. Here especially was the contrast felt. That saying of Rabbi Akiba here acquires one of its emphatic tones: it is before your Father in heaven that you purify yourselves.

All that lives in Jewish religiousness is most intimately combined in the experience of atonement: secret and commandment, source and path, the certainty of a granting divine love, and the certainty of a commanding divine justice. Both have become welded into a single spiritual whole, which gives to man his inward unity. It gives to the faith, which questions man and answers him, its totality: trust in God with its possession, and reverence for God with its demand, both in one. Atonement is devoutness and duty joined into one. The two fundamental experiences of religion, that man is created and that he creates, find here an all encompassing harmony, and faith in God its final and complete expression. With that faith in God is associated closely faith in man, which, in its ultimate and most complete form, is faith in atonement, — in the ethical redemption of ourselves, of our fellow men and of mankind. Judaism is a religion of atonement; to the meaning of life it gives thus its completing chapter. Two old Rabbinic sayings express this thought as follows: "The purpose and aim of all creation is atonement." "It was evening and it was morning — one day, that is, the day of atonement." The ceremonial customs of Judaism also gave outward form to this idea. The day of atonement became the sacred centre of the year, its most important religious holy day. It was joined with the festival of the New Year, the "Day of Judgment", so as to speak to man at the beginning of the year



about his responsibility to God, and of that which atonement demands and grants.

As long as the sacrificial service existed in Judaism, or, at least, so far as faith recognized its validity, the clear distinctiveness of the idea of atonement was subject to certain limitations. As the outward divine element in atonement, the sin offering came in between man and God as a sort of mediator: the mediaeval conceptions of mediation were, therefore, closely connected with, or started from, the sin offering. The sin offering was meant to be a bridge leading to the atoning God, but it came *between* man and his God. Rabbi Eleazar, who lived soon after the destruction of the Temple, pronounced these firm and bold words: "On the very day when the Temple was destroyed there fell an iron wall, which had raised itself up between Israel and the Father in heaven." These were the words of a man who was the teacher of many, and of whom we know that he frequently emphasized the fact that prayer was more than sacrifice, that it was devoutness, the inner emotion, which caused man to be united with God. From a somewhat later period comes the passage: "The Law says, Let the sinner bring a sin offering, and he will obtain atonement; but God says, Let the sinner return, and he will obtain atonement." This passage is not exceptional. There may be heard in it something of the passionate speech of the old prophets, something of the ethical battle, which they waged, with hitherto unknown passion, against the idea that in an external object any spiritual reality could be contained or given, — that an animal sacrifice, even a "vain oblation", could lead man to God.

The sacrificial system, it cannot be denied, was for a long time of great importance for the education of the people; in its profound symbols and mysterious forms it brought home to the mind many a religious idea; it had earnestly inculcated devotion and obedience to God and the demand for atonement and repentance. But from the moment when the idea of atonement had been clearly realized in its true significance — and it was no mere coincidence that this happened in a period when sacrifices were perforce suspended — the sin offering, and with it the entire sacrificial service, had outlived itself. It then began to lose more and more of its old validity, and when, with the destruction of the Temple

in A. D. 70, it came to an end, the best spirits of the community realized and acknowledged how unessential it had been for true atonement. With renewed strength the old prophetic idea awoke that God "desired love and not sacrifice", that "the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit", that God did not "command sacrifice" but only "justice and righteousness" and "obeying the voice of God". Once more it was said that the free ethical deed of man constitutes his atoning deed. "More than all sacrifices are beneficence, devotion, repentance, and the words of the Torah." "Repentance and good deeds", "repentance (*teshubah*, return), doing good and prayer": these conceptions now form a religious unity, and this union becomes a lasting possession of the language of the Jewish religion. The idea and the ethical significance of the sacrificial service thus remain intact by the substitution for the sacrifice on the altar of the demand of beneficence, that sacrifice of the good deed which is the worship of God in actual life. Sacrifice steps out of the Temple, that forecourt of life, into real life; atonement and repentance enter into the innermost sanctuary, into the human heart, where the Prophets and Psalmists declared their true place was. Religious self-certainty, spiritual freedom, were thereby granted to man. So it was made possible and brought about that Judaism could wholly strip itself of the sacrificial service without having to replace it by any substitute of sacrament or objective and outward mystery.

The idea of *purification* now attained its clear content. Not infrequently this idea had been blurred by material sacrifice; the words: "Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes: cease to do evil; learn to do well", had been a constant theme of Prophetic teaching against sacrifice. Now, with the cessation of sacrifice, the demand for purity had secured for it all its immediacy and absoluteness. The man who "returns" — so it is now clearly understood — is purified and cleaned. Something corrupt and polluting in his life is cast aside, and the genuine and healthy begins again. Thus he again becomes pure; all beginning, initiation, decisiveness, in the ethical and the religious sphere, have their purity, their creativeness. The idea of improvement is insufficient for that which man can, and ought to, experience here, just as the idea of error is

insufficient for the sin which he has committed. The soul experiences a transformation, and it is not merely an ethical, but a religious transformation. In it secret and commandment are realized. It is a return to the divine creation, to the source; the Divine, the kingdom of God, are brought back into life. It is not an isolated happening, but a whole; not only a step, but a way. It occurs in the innermost, in the depths of personality, in man's purity and freedom, in his wholeness; all "return" is a "return with the whole heart and with the whole soul". It is "breaking up of fallow ground", as Hosea puts it.

Something new in life is brought about by "return". In this religious sense the word "new" is a special coinage of the Hebrew Bible; man wins a *new* existence, or, to speak with the Prophets, "a new heart and a new spirit". "Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit." This prophetic thought was taken up by the Haggada. Man, it says, is created anew by atonement, he undergoes a religious rebirth. He regains that which had been given to him at the outset by the love of God, and that which had been commanded him at the beginning by the righteousness of God; he regains purity and freedom, he recovers, as it were, his birth. Sin had disinherited him, estranged him from his true being, driven him from his path and his task; but now he is once more in possession of his life, and of that which his life had possessed from its very origin. Sin was the destroying and annihilating factor, the disease of his life; but now he has recovered, he is revived, he is once more alive. Guilt had "fettered" him, enslaved him; by atonement he is "released", his chains are removed; he is liberated and redeemed. His life begins again.

In this spiritual experience of the rebirth of man, of his freedom, which reveals itself in becoming as "a new creature", we may perceive a most characteristic quality of Judaism. Rebirth is experienced as the creation which man effects. His birth was a secret or a mystery; it happened to him; his rebirth is something which he himself does, his own decision, his free "return" to the secret. Without his will he was born; by his will he is reborn. His existence was created; he himself creates it anew; he gives back to himself his beginning. It is the creative power of man

which therein realizes itself, even as Rabbi Chanina expressed it: "If you obey and fulfil the commandments of God, it is as if you fulfilled yourselves, as if you created yourselves"; man forms himself anew when he returns to God. This idea proceeds even further. There is a Rabbinic sentence which says: "God believed in the world and created it; men came into existence, not to be wicked, but to be righteous": such is the interpretation of the words of Moses: "A God of faithfulness and without iniquity; just and right is he". If man "returns", he re-establishes that divine meaning and purpose of the world which, in his share of it, had been destroyed by his sin; he builds up life again as life, as God created it, so that God may believe again in His world. Man reconstitutes the world; his "return" is a condition of the world's continuance. Ethical power in its most significant sense is thus attributed to man, and the Talmud could venture on the hyperbole: "Where the repentant (the men of "return") stand, there the perfectly righteous cannot stand." Ethical freedom, in its deciding, resolving power, manifests itself in repentance ("return").

If man returns thus to his purity and freedom, his sin ceases to belong to him; it ceases to be his sin, and it has no longer a place in his life. "As far as the east is from the west, so far he removes our transgressions from us." Or as the Bible also says: "God blots out our transgressions", and makes them vanish "as a thick cloud". With a subtle psychological insight the Talmud points out that human guilt by man's "return" loses its sinful character; "what was deliberate purpose is now error". So indeed it is. He who has found his way back from the wrong path to the right one, has only erred, for he has found the right path again. When he has returned, he looks upon his sin as upon something strange to him. His relationship to it has become different. Since he has freely returned to God, sin is outside his life, just as the wrong path is no longer *his* way, when once he has again trodden the right path. He has left and departed from sin.

Inasmuch as human freedom is thus an essential part of atonement, the danger of "humble" self-righteousness and self-complacency is avoided, — that arrogance of the repentant who think that all is over and done because God has forgiven them.

God can grant everything, but man cannot accomplish everything. Even in his "return" he has an unending task. With his regained freedom begins a new responsibility, and with his regained purity a new opportunity for new duties is created. Man never entirely ceases to be in need of atonement. Hence the admonishing words: "Return unto God one day before you die"; "return to God on every day of your life". It is true that in the Psalms the feeling of innocence is often expressed in touching words; but what is *really* expressed in such passages is only a vivid consciousness of the persecuted and the oppressed that they stand on an ethically higher plane than their persecutors. Far more frequently there occurs in Judaism the phrase: "for the sake of our many sins!", a phrase in which the speakers question their own lives, and seek for guilt in their own breasts. The prayers of Judaism have a note of their own, which reveals how keen the spiritual need for atonement remained, how full were the hearts of the constant yearning to be redeemed, not only from cares and troubles, from dangers and anxieties, but, first and foremost, from sin.

Only when atonement is not satisfied with the mere personal consciousness of salvation does it carry within itself this new ethical impulse. Then does it lead to an increase of ethical depth. In the purification which man accomplishes, his conscience becomes more tender. If a break in man's fellowship with God is overcome, then that fellowship is felt all the more intensely; it is made more certain and secure. Atonement before God effects an increase in ethical strength; the fruit of atonement is the fear of God. That is what the words of the psalm mean: "But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared." In reverence for God lies the spiritual beginning of all atonement, and with atonement grows up in man reverence for God, admonishing, demanding. Here too yearning and prayer become one. Words like that verse of the psalm would be impossible in Buddhism; the latter finds its ideal in the man who "does not blame himself", and who, "like a beautiful lotus which is not attached to the water, is not attached to either good or evil", but "has detached himself from the good as well as from the evil deed". It is an essential feature of the idea of atonement, as taught by Judaism — and

this places it in fundamental contrast to the Buddhist idea of redemption — that redemption is no goal of rest; it is to be a demand for a continuous further ethical ascent, an exhortation to that endless duty in which all life consists.

Thus atonement too leads to the unending commandment: „Ye shall be holy: for I the Lord thy God am holy.” Man becomes holy when he shows himself to have been created in the image of God, when he reveals the Divine by his deed, proves in his purity and freedom that he belongs to God. Thus he recognizes God as the Holy One, and “he sanctifies God”. The Bible already coined this expression. Later on it acquired a definite and clear impress, namely, the important conception of the *kiddush ha—Shem*, the “sanctification of the Name”, a conception the full meaning of which will, however, be set forth in another connection. Every ethical deed, — so the conception emphasizes, — every decision for the good, “sanctify God’s name”; they and they alone do so; they are a manifestation and realization of the Divine, and through them is established a sanctuary, an abode of the good upon earth, a place prepared for the kingdom of God. Every wrong deed, every impure feeling, every ethical weakness, are a “profanation of God’s name”; through them a bit of the world is bereft of divinity. As a Rabbinic phrase puts it: God is withdrawn from the world, and the world is withdrawn from God. Man is the cause of this. “If you sanctify yourselves”, says the Talmud, “then you have sanctified God.” “If Israel does the will of God, God’s name is glorified in the world, and when Israel does not do the will of God, God’s name is profaned in the world.” Or, as another saying, attributed to R. Simon ben Yochai, has it: “You are my witnesses, says the Lord, and I am God: when you are my witnesses, I am God, and when you are not my witnesses, I am not God.” Man becomes a witness to the existence of God; through men God is known. Ethical action becomes a proof of the existence of God. Few things speak so eloquently as the fact that it was just this conception of the “sanctification of God’s name” which became more popular than any other in Judaism. It connoted the quintessence of human obligation towards God.

The result of this demand is martyrdom. For martyrdom is the truest possible sanctification of God’s name, the truest proof which

man can bring that to him God is God. The decision is taken, not for this hour or that, but for life: it is yea or nay for life or death: *that* is here the witnessing for God. The freedom of man before God, religious responsibility, speak their last word; here is the final issue; heroism becomes commandment. If it is an unconditional duty to decide for God, then the limit of life forms no limit to duty. Against the vastness of its task all life appears insignificant, and even the fullest existence stands for little contrasted with the infinite ethical demand. For the demand extends beyond all the days of the individual human being, and so it is fitting that earthly existence is pledged for it and is sacrificed; the commandment is greater than human life. Through the commandment life has to be realized, and therefore the sacrifice of life is the true fulfilment of life, or, as Akiba, who himself became a martyr, said: "the sacrifice of life is the fulfilment of the commandment to love God with the whole soul and with the whole life." The man who becomes a martyr exalts his religious personality and his love for God above his life; he manifests the eternal value of his soul. Earthly existence has to experience ruin and death; but the life of religion triumphs; the commandment of God conquers, and the kingdom of God maintains its place. The freedom of man wins the victory. In the very face of death man still chooses: he chooses the will of God, and through death he chooses life.

In martyrdom death thus ceases to be fate; it is no longer the mere end of life. It becomes a deed carried out by man, a deed of his freedom and of his love for God. It does not resemble the desperate or calm abandonment of life by the man who commits suicide. That is a submissive concession to fate. Usually death constrains and refutes, and is a contradiction to creative power; in martyrdom death becomes the proof of that power, the proof of man's freedom. Through death man realizes the commandment, and as the old Rabbinic saying declares, he creates himself through death; death becomes an affirmation, the ethical answer of the soul. In it the secret is united with the commandment. Whilst it is generally, like birth, the mere lot of all human existence, death now becomes decision, a voluntary shaping of life, the fulfilment of that commandment wherein all commandments are

contained: to love God and to sanctify His name. Death enters into the "Thou shalt" of man, into ethics, into his freedom; the myth of death, with which all mythology of fate begins, is thus overcome. The conception of sacrifice, too, receives now its profoundest significance, for sacrifice becomes free and autonomous. Man lays his existence at the feet of the commandment, he "gives up his soul for the sanctification of God's name".

It is the pride of Judaism that the idea and the demand of martyrdom were created by it. It was from Judaism that men first learnt to know that they belonged in their innermost being to the One, that they learnt to cling to God, to accept the categorical, the absoluteness of the commandment, as the law of their lives, and to respond to it *with* their lives. In Judaism, and through Judaism, men learnt to assert and maintain this possession of their lives in the face of all happenings, whether the sudden acts of compulsion, or the slow issues of success, to furnish the proof of genuineness, as only sacrifice can do, against all the outward show which success lends to life, to experience and demonstrate that something invincible is given to man. In Judaism all this has been a constant doctrine of life, a doctrine for all, a Torah, not merely a sublime and especial ideal for the few, and never a mere song in which feeling seeks to offer itself up to that which is great. The history of Judaism is proof of this. For that reason, moreover, martyrdom has never been a mere fate, but has been a deed. If the communities of Judaism have their "Books of Remembrances", their written and unwritten books of memories, which register the witnesses of faith, and which are fuller in names, and heavier with sorrow, than those of any other denomination, then there were surely added to them the events of page upon page of those days when the many attacked the few, the few who dared to contradict the many, when the fist was aimed at the spirit, but struck the body. The force, which sought to refute and to overpower, served only to increase the ranks of the martyrs. But the decisive factor was always the will which lived in those men, the will to martyrdom, the will to act, and not merely to think, unto the end, the will for the One God. The power of remaining a subject opposing fate, of choosing rather than letting things run their course, stood up in its might



against compulsion. This very power, this might, is Judaism, and on that account Judaism has never known any times without their martyrs, those times which may be called unhappy in their happiness. As no other religion, Judaism has been able to make the confession expressed by the psalm, which one century after another has had to repeat, and has indeed been entitled to repeat: "All this is come upon us; yet have we not forgotten thee, neither have we dealt falsely in thy covenant. Our heart is not turned back, neither have our steps declined from thy way. . . . Surely we have not forgotten the name of our God, or stretched out our hands to a strange god. God searcheth this out: for he knoweth the secrets of the heart. Yea, for thy sake are we killed all the day long, we are counted as sheep for the slaughter."

This will to martyrdom is the last word of human life, and it is spoken only where those other words, the words of decision, have gone before. Before the martyrdom of death comes the martyrdom of life, before the courage to face death the courage to face life, very often the far harder courage. Heroism is but the terminating commandment of Jewish religiousness, the strongest expression of its sincerity. Because Jewish ethics have a certain unbendingness and unyielding element, through which they overcome the world, they were able to make the demand of giving up life for the sake of duty. Thus in Judaism, to be oppressed and persecuted for the sake of truth, and, what hurts even more, to be ridiculed for truth's sake, to appear a fool and a madman in the eyes of men, to be to them a mockery and a derision for the sake of God, could become an inherited task. Sorrow becomes the path to freedom, and in suffering the name of God is sanctified. All this did not merely remain the experience of an hour for a few chosen souls, or a mere mood of the many. The history of Judaism tells of this too. It is a unique and incomparable testimonial to the heroism of the conscience and to the idealism of decision, a testimonial to the fact that to the Jewish people its religion was always its life, its confession of faith, not in word, but in deed. The Jew demonstrated in his religion the *fides obstinata*, the "obstinate faithfulness", of which Tacitus spoke, a great incorruptibility. Again and again he was

able deliberately to choose suffering, and death was the last manifestation of his freedom. Wherever there was a Jew, there the fact stood clear that the spiritual was more than the world, and all that the world could yield and give. All the useful and pleasant things upon earth have always been on the other side. A certain element of true idealism, which can end in martyrdom, has always been inherent in the Jew; it can cause the ethical haughtiness with which the oppressed insists on rising up again. It can say: "Though he has sinned, he is nevertheless an Israelite." Writers on ethics sometimes regret that it is not realized today what martyrdom is, what it means to bear and to suffer for the sake of truth, and that the buoyant power of ethics, the grandeur of ethical thought, thereby suffer. Here, too, Judaism is compelled to undergo a certain experience. If the failure to understand Judaism is so widespread, it is partly on account of the fact that the personal and spiritual experience of martyrdom, and with it the capacity to comprehend it and to sympathise with it, has long since disappeared from many successful creeds.

In martyrdom *veracity* becomes a deed, and *character* an ethical achievement, which is ready to put everything to the stake. All veracity is a testimony given by man to himself and for himself, something which he speaks with his heart. It has its root in the demand: "with all your heart and with all your soul!" Inwardness and sincerity make for wholeness. In faith in the One God, in man's relation to His absolute commandment and to the "Either — Or" which the command puts before the will, in the reverence of the commanding God, there has been revealed to man what religious veracity and conviction truly are: spiritual and not merely mental conviction, a deeply personal conviction, which take hold of and decide the whole being of man and his whole life. "Thou shalt be whole with the Lord thy God!" That is the true expression of this veracity, as it is also of the fear of God. Truth and the whole heart, and reverence with them, stand side by side in the Bible: "Teach me thy way, O Lord; I will walk in thy truth: unite my heart to fear thy name." "Only fear the Lord, and serve him in truth with all your heart." „Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve him in wholeness and in truth." Through such sayings ethical veracity was able to develop.

Veracity, as these biblical sentences indicate, is a service of God, something which is not only enshrined in the soul, but something which man gives and realizes, something which becomes manifest in his actions. It is in them that veracity lives; out of right deed grows right character or disposition. In the structure of ethics, and in the sequence of its conceptions, disposition or character comes first, but in the growth of ethical life the deed precedes disposition. Character is created and formed by the ethical deed. As the Prophet says: "He has walked in my statutes, and has kept my judgments, to deal truly." And the Psalmist praises the man "who walks uprightly, and works righteousness, and speaks the truth in his heart". Truth comes at the end; actions shape and determine the movements and tendencies of the soul. An upright deed produces an upright thought, a truthful act creates veracity, just as conversely a perverse path leads to perverse thinking. Finally, we always believe in what we do. If the disposition is to be living and firm, a consistency of deed is imperatively required. For thus is avoided the danger which is entailed by sheer emphasis on disposition, the danger which results from the disposition's remaining nothing but disposition, from man's being satisfied with it, and not demanding from himself the deed — as with that humility which is nothing but humility. Disposition which does not live by deed, which is not awakened and kept awake by deed, becomes frozen and stunted. Only in the truth of life can the truth of the heart be unfolded.

Because in Judaism the power of the deed and its value for the development of character are well appreciated, motive and disposition can be definitely demanded as the innermost element of deed, as its soul, as that which makes it indeed a whole, the personal action of man. Man creates and initiates action, and therefore action is to bear witness to him, to be the expression of his character; only thus does action receive its full significance, and become in the full ethical meaning *his deed*. We really act only when we act as we think; we speak — speech too is action — when we speak as we feel. "Our within should be like our without." This requirement, too, has always been included in the commandment to sanctify the Name of God, and in the

commandment to acknowledge the judging and testing God. God is denied when the deed of man is lacking in truth. It is thus, according to the Talmud, that the hypocrite becomes a sinner, for the name of God is profaned by him. Yochanan ben Zakkai spoke to his disciples these significant words: "He who commits a sin in the dark puts man above God; he fears men, but not God." Something similar was said by Rabbi Isaac: "He who sins in secret acts as though he wished to drive away the presence of the omnipresent God." Or, as another and later teacher said: "He rejects the honour of his Creator."

That which man does before his God stands on a level with that which man says to God. Like prayer, so "also commandment demands its devoutness" (*Kawwanah*). It is characteristic of the way in which Judaism conceives all things religiously that in its religious language, inwardness, disposition and devoutness are expressed by one and the same word. Indeed it is impossible to describe inward disposition better than by saying that it should be devoutness, that it should set man before the presence of God; disposition is the devoutness of the commandment. The one experiences the loving God, the other the commanding God. That is why, at the end of so many commandments, and especially of those which require inwardness for their due fulfilment, we find the words: "fear thy God". A Talmudic sentence tries to explain the matter thus: "Every command which requires the heart ends with the words 'fear thy God'." God calls on man in His commandment, just as man calls on God in his prayer; just as it is the heart which speaks in prayer, so it is the heart which is to hear the injunctions of duty and is to answer them. Prayer is "a service of the heart"; "a prayer without devoutness is like a body without a soul". And so it is with the commandment; here too "God demands the heart". All our actions acquire their inner value only from the motive or the inwardness which they express, from the purity and genuineness of the will out of which they spring. "Do not ask whether a man does little or much, but ask whether his heart is turned towards God." The emotions, the desires and the phantasies of the heart must also be holy; the sinful thought or the sinful imagination is also a sin. The Ten Commandments conclude with a warning against evil desires and

lusts, against the sin which does not become deed, and is perhaps not even intended to become a deed. Here too we find the stern: "thou shalt not".

Thus, "be true towards God" became the commandment of all commandments. It became so more and more as religion grew out of the days of childhood, with their delight in deceit and craft. In the thought of uprightness and honesty towards God the numerous duties became bound together into a unity from which they now all proceed. The demand of truth permeates and fills them; it transforms them into a homogeneous possession of faith. More especially are the thought and feeling of the Jewish Middle Ages filled with the conviction that the value of an action, that which enables it to stand the test before God in order that the divine commandment may be fulfilled in it, is to be found in the purity of its inwardness and motive. Disposition and deed become inseparable in religion. The characteristic and decisive quality of the deed is its inwardness, its soul. The importance of the deed lies not only in that which it accomplishes, but in that which it gives to the heart. As a thinker of the Middle Ages, Abraham ibn Ezra, said: "The essence of all commandments is to make the human heart upright." The injunction to love God with all one's heart, with all one's soul, and with all one's might, comes in again here with full force. Few books have become so popular among religious Jews as Bachya ibn Pakuda's "Duties of the Heart". The injunction: "with all thy heart", this exhortation to purity of deed, speaks again and again from the pages of that book to its readers, telling them how the deed is only realized by inwardness and sincerity, and how, on the other hand, character only becomes formed by deed.

Together with veracity there is also definitely demanded *unselfishness* in deed, and inwardness. To be true, true before God, and to be unselfish, are virtually the same. We are to do the good, as the two ever recurring and corresponding expressions run, "*for its own sake*", and "*for the sake of God*". "Whatever you do, do for the sake of God." "He who does not do good for the sake of good is not worthy to live." We are not to allow ourselves to be guided by any consideration of reward, or fear of punishment, but we are to do right "out of love". "Whatever you do, do it

out of love alone; that really means to love God." "Be not like servants who serve a master in the hope of reward, but be like servants who serve a master without hope of reward; and let the fear of God be upon you." "Praise him who loves the commandments of God, but not him who loves the reward of the commandments." "Do not ask about reward for all these commandments, but know, Blessed is the man who does them, and the son of man who holds fast to them." It is here implied that every good deed finds its recompense and satisfaction in itself; through the blessing which it carries within itself, it becomes its own reward. The concluding sentence of Spinoza's "Ethics": "Happiness is not the reward of virtue, but virtue itself", is really an ancient Jewish saying. For it is only another form, and perhaps only a rendering, of the words of Ben Asai, which are contained in the "Ethics of the Fathers": "The reward of a command is a command, and the punishment of a sin is a sin."

Admittedly these conceptions, like the conception of truth, have gone through a development. The Hebrew Bible, when it speaks, as it frequently and emphatically does, of the punishment of sin, and of the reward of piety, speaks of tangible and earthly rewards and punishments. In the history of the education of the Jewish people this immaturity had its need and its value. He who knows the history of man will understand that. But, as the goal and outcome of the development in Judaism, we get this definite result, namely, that categorically demanded of the deed are purity and freedom and unselfishness, and that in the continuance of the work of goodness must lie its reward. How this idea became the common possession of the whole Jewish community may be seen again in the entire religious literature of the Middle Ages, which unanimously states that only a deed intended and carried out for its own sake is to be esteemed as a good deed. It alone is done, as the ancient saying runs, from the "love of God".

Furthermore, it must not be forgotten that the hope of reward often means something quite different from the mere expectant demand, which immediately holds out an open palm, different from that mere desire for some definite return and for an assured gift of thanks. In the conception of reward are often contained the ethical demand, the idea of the consequence, the outcome, of

the human deed. The thought of responsibility and judgment, and the thought of reward, are connected together. The notion is that every deed has its effect in the life of him who performed it, that with the mere doing the deed, in the man's existence, has not yet come to an end. Every sin which man commits is his own sin, and so draws his "I" into its circle, and brings punishment in its train; God avenges guilt. Every good deed he does is likewise his own deed, and out of it therefore something comes into his life; it carries the reward within itself. God rewards faithfulness to his commandment. "Behold his reward is with him, and his work before him." With the hope of reward there goes the hope that, in spite of all, the good will bear fruit, and that it will be a blessing for him who accomplishes it. If it is depicted in material and earthly similes, this must often be regarded as just an expression of the faith that goodness will be victorious upon earth, in the earthly existence of man. The hope of reward bears witness to man's faith in the future, or, as might be said, to his individual Messianic conviction. Man makes himself the subject of the story of his life. He becomes the subject of his morality as well as the subject of his salvation; he desires to create a future for his life.

It is the religious yearning of the soul which is expressed in the hope of reward, the tension between that which is and that which ought to be, between that which was given to man and that which was promised to him. The yearning for happiness is inborn in man; in it is revealed his yearning for an ideal world. In his striving and struggling to create his life, to prove himself to be the man called by God, there live at the same time a dreaming and meditating about the fulfilment and satisfaction of his life, a poetic musing about his future, when his true personality will be able to be established, and his best qualities to come into their own. It is significant that in the Hebrew Bible the word consolation is so often used for reward. It is the same thought as that which Kant expressed in the words: "trust in the promise of the moral law". Every aim also represents an assurance, every demand a promise. It is not easy to detach the striving after perfection from the striving after bliss; perfection and bliss merge into one. It is a truly human hope that "they who sow in tears

shall reap in joy". We are to be pious for the sake of our lives, but who does not also want to live, to live happily in his piety? Where the feeling of duty has not stiffened into a cold spiritual mechanism, there this hope and this desire are astir. "The man of yearning", to use Pascal's words, does not necessarily differ from the man with a sense of duty and of conscience; they are generally one and the same. It is frequently this yearning which finds expression in the idea of reward.

It is this yearning which crosses the border of mortal life, finding true reality beyond the troubles and appearances of this earthly world. With the conviction of religion, infinity enters the life of man, in his life as created and in his life as creating. He was given an origin in the eternal, and he cannot be deprived of it, even in death, for it never ceases to be his origin. The road to the eternal is indicated to him; it never vanishes, not even in death, and never ceases to be his road. The direction of life and its depth stretch beyond the boundary of human existence. Over beginning and end remain abidingly the nearness of God, the eternal source and the eternal goal. The life of man means more than the narrowness of existence in this world. With all its deficiencies and limitations, its pain and suffering, it is, as the old Rabbinic metaphor says, but a place of "preparation", an "ante-chamber"; it is only the "life of the hour". The true life is the "eternal life". Man is created and destined to be different from the world, to be holy. As the image of God he belongs to that other, the higher life; he is "a child of the world to come". The spiritual, the good, is implanted in him as the strength, as the reality, of his existence, and this, the truly real of his life is exalted above death and destruction. His life remains life, even beyond death.

The loneliness of man, that loneliness of him who is different, exalted above the world, and who yet sees himself surrounded by the infinitude of its doings and its destiny, is overcome by this assurance of eternal life. With his faith in God man was able to gain the mastery over his solitude; with the idea of immortality into which this faith develops, trust gains a new note, and the paradox of the eternity of mortal man, the paradox of human divineness, gains a new precision. In death the most lonely



loneliness, the silence without response, opens its gate to man, the gate leading to the path which he has to tread for himself, and of which none who have gone before can tell him. But through this gate he now believes that he passes into that eternity to which he belongs, to the great answer in which all the questions of his life, and all its paradoxes, are included. With the first man loneliness first came into the world. For loneliness is always there, where somebody is tied, and yet not tied. The flower in the forest, and the animal in the wilderness, are not lonely, and God is not lonely in his heavens. It is only man who is lonely, he who has been created like the rest of the world, and is yet different. Loneliness first began when began the first yearning, the yearning of him who is tied, and yet able to rise above his bondage. This loneliness and yearning are also found in the ethical nature of man; for there arises there the yearning of spiritual striving and struggling, and there arises there, too, the loneliness of him who seeks after the ideal, and carries within him the desire for the eternal significance of life, for its sublime and divine quality, for that permanent value of life which has been enjoined upon him. In the conviction of eternal life and of life with God, all this yearning finds its goal, and all this loneliness its fulfilment. The tension in the human soul which gazes upwards from earth to the heights, and hears itself summoned thither, can now be appeased. Redemption from loneliness, calm out of yearning, mean peace, and peace is given in the thought of eternal life.

Man's secret and his path now attain their final significance. Concealment and shelter in one, that protecting profundity of existence, were the secret or mystery, as conceived by the Jewish soul. Eternal life now makes that which is most hidden, the darkness of darkness, which is death, the entrance to eternal protection — concealment and shelter in one; God receives the man whom He created. Beginning and endlessness in one, that constant task of existence, constitute in Judaism the path of man, the abiding firmness and positiveness which make demands even upon his fulfilment, and point out new tasks to his attainment. Eternal life transforms beginning into duration — beginning and endlessness in one; born to create, man finds his goal in God. Secret and path united in atonement. Man attains once more

to the depth of his life, to that which is holy in his existence, and so returns to God; such is the meaning of *atonement*. It is likewise the meaning of immortality. Eternity is the *great atonement of finitude*. The earthly is reconciled with the endless. All atonement is fundamentally this: reconciliation of the finite and the infinite. The secret which becomes the path, and the path which becomes the secret, were recognized in Judaism as "return", as *Teshubah*. Death means this *Teshubah*. Death is the great "return", the great liberation from the merely earthly and limiting; earth vanishes, and eternity receives. "The dust returns to the earth whence it came, and the spirit returns to God who gave it." The true meaning of the idea of atonement in Judaism is that the life of man can begin again. With death there comes the decisive and concluding beginning, the last rebirth, the new creation which contains everything — the whole path and the whole secret. Purity and freedom in their ultimate fulfilment, the great atonement, that is eternal life. It is called, therefore, the great Sabbath, just like the day of atonement, "the day which is wholly Sabbath, and the repose of life in eternity". It is the great peace. In life man seeks and moves "towards peace"; he who has passed away, as it says in the Talmud, is "in peace"; he has attained. The yearning after perfection is given fulfilment: complete perfection and greatest bliss in one. Life has reached completeness; death becomes the great revelation. Thus the element of atonement and revelation enters also into martyrdom. Where God commands death, the sacrifice of mortal existence, He also promises and grants fulfilment, eternal life. The unending task corresponds to an unending future; commandment and confidence become one.

Little is said in the Hebrew Bible concerning the continuance of our existence after death, but this continuance is not repudiated or denied. As has been pointed out, it is inherent in the character of the prophetic religion, which claims above all the commandment of a new life, that it places all its emphasis upon the moral nature of our mortal existence and the demands of *this* world. But there is a special reason for this reserve concerning belief in immortality. It is a silent protest against all the excessive and unbridled fancies in which the "nature" religions round Israel

decked out the world beyond, and against the confusion of men's minds to which such fancies necessarily gave rise. It was a significant, eloquent silence. The prohibition: "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything", was interpreted, consciously or unconsciously, as a command that the images from the realm of death, the figures of the nether-world and of the upper-world, should not enter the spiritual life of Judaism. The rejection of all these was also a rejection of paganism with its cult of images. "Thou shalt not make any representation, or form any conception, of all these things", was in true conformity with the Second Commandment.

When idolatry was overcome in Judaism it became possible to speak of eternal life in a freer and more definite fashion. It presents itself to the hopeful mind as a spiritual kingdom, as a life of the soul in a purity which is denied to man in this world, as the "purified world" which "enables him to enjoy the glory of God". What the Hebrew Bible announces as the reward of piety is now transferred to the world beyond. The "length of the days" which it promises now appears as "eternal life", and the message of happiness which it brings is interpreted to mean "eternal bliss". Thus the reward becomes spiritualized, and in it the idea of the spiritual and imperishable is further developed. The spirit comes from God, and returns to Him again. It unites man with God; God is spirit, and there is spirit in man; God is "the God of the spirits of all flesh". The conception of a spiritual vocation is now developed, the conception of a higher life which, beginning in this world, is completed in the world of eternity. Here again the specially Jewish and distinctive feature is that this spiritual element is bound up with the ethical element, with that which is ethically holy. It is the power of the good, the faculty of religious action. In it the Divine, the "Holy Spirit", reveals itself. As a solemn sentence in an old Rabbinic writing says: "Let heaven and earth bear witness: be they heathen or Israelite, man or woman, man-servant or maid-servant, the Holy Spirit rests upon them all according to their deeds."

It must be admitted that with the incursion of diverse eschatological and mystical ideas, the sensuous representation of the world beyond, and above all of future punishment, soon found a

place; the history of Judaism has to tell more than once of the adoption of such speculations. But fixed limits were set to them, and one pathological excess of cruel phantasy was specially checked by the definite principle that the period of atoning punishment in the world beyond was limited in duration to one year or seven years, and that only the reward, which is peace, was eternal. More important than the thought of these punishments was the oft-repeated saying that death expiates, or a saying such as that the Paradise which men had imagined ought to be set on fire, and the Hell of their devising ought to be extinguished. Where we may seek for the characteristic Jewish element in its clearest expression is in the attitude of the spiritual leaders of Judaism towards these materialistic conceptions of the future world. We may recall with what compassionate scorn Maimonides dismissed all these fantastic and sensuous conceptions of the world to come as antiquated child's-play. The spiritual, imageless conception of immortality remains the possession of Judaism. It permits of no representation, scarcely even a verbal one. "The world to come, none has seen it, besides thee, O God, alone!"

Thus an alluring or threatening representation of the world beyond was prevented from impairing ethical earnestness; the commandment of earthly life was not reduced in importance, and earth was not deprived of a constant confirmation of morality. As the promised end of human struggle, the future world is the goal of holiness and perfection, and so becomes the demand for moral endeavour upon earth. Life in this world is the beginning; there can, therefore, also be applied to eternal life the words in which Judaism asserts again and again its peculiar character: "Begin; decide!" There is no completion without beginning, without work. To man is pointed out the path he should follow, and immortality prolongs this path beyond his mortal existence. Man creates eternal life. Immortality too becomes a commandment in Judaism, and mythology is conquered by the commandment, as is likewise the endlessness of fate. With the commandment is united the certainty of origin, which, again, in its turn, becomes one with the certainty of atonement. Before eternal life too stand the words: "I am the Lord, your God, *thou shalt*" — secret and commandment in one.

The religious experiences which are granted to the human soul in this world, the experiences of the commandment fulfilled and of the path rediscovered, these, and these alone, are, therefore, to teach us about that better world. The glimpse into the world beyond is the glimpse into our own clear conscience, into our own pure heart. Eternity becomes revealed to the man who knows his origin and his path. The elevating bliss of religious and moral decision, of religious and moral feeling, lets him foreshadow eternal bliss, as compared with mere mortal joy. It is the nearness of God, according to the prevailing doctrine of Jewish philosophy of religion, which we men can experience in this world, and nothing but this nearness will be our lot in eternity. It was thus expressed in the Talmudic sentence: "Sanctification upon earth is an image of sanctification in the world to come; here, as beyond, God says to man: I, the Lord, sanctify you." Best of all is this expressed in the wonderful saying of Rabbi Jacob, a man who lived at a time when the minds of all around him again revelled in fancies about the world beyond. "One hour of return and good deeds in this world is more than all the life of the world to come; an hour of bliss in the world to come is more than all the life of this world." This view is confirmed by that other saying that we are able "to gain eternity in a single hour". It is also expressed in that farewell greeting of the ancient sages which would bind together all that endows human existence with reality and duration, uniting the fulfilment of life with eternal good, and the trust of the soul in eternity with the permanence of human blessing upon earth: "May you find your world (your eternity) in your life, and may your future be in the life of the world to come, and may your hope last from generation to generation."

Here we find again that tension, with all its yearning, between the near and the far, which is so characteristic of Jewish religiousness, the tension between man's goal and his place, between eternal life and life upon earth, between the certainty which lies in the mystery and the secret, and the certainty which is given in the definite. Mortal existence passes over into eternity, the mortal field of man into the kingdom of God; eternity enters mortal existence, the kingdom of God enters the mortal sphere.

The near becomes the far, and the far the near. This world and the world beyond merge into one another; they are nothing but the two poles of the same religious feeling. Life feels reverence for itself, the feeling for that in it which is greater and holier than itself, the feeling of eternal life in this life. Finitude and eternity are united in the moral deed and in religious experience and hope. In Judaism, there is no yearning without duty, and no duty without yearning. Salvation is bound up with this world and its strict demand, and this world and its definite task are bound up with the great atonement in eternity. Here, too, belief is also commandment, for we believe in that which we do. As by our decision and by our experience we make God *our* God, so we make eternity *our* eternity. It is just this which is so characteristic of Judaism, that both are for it as one, the secure relation to the reality of this world, and the living feeling that this reality is insufficient and unliberated. The unity of both these two is a peculiar possession of Judaism. It is true that now the one, and now the other, of the two was the more markedly emphasized, according to the spiritual disposition of particular teachers or times. But in the full faith of Judaism both are one. Without the one *and* the other, and without the unity of *both*, there can be no Judaism.

People with a one-sided pessimistic conception of salvation have often reproached Judaism with being too attached to this world and of deliberate this-worldliness. In regard to this charge we may recall the words of a religious thinker: "He to whom this life does not appear to be great and worth living, can have no true desire for the future life." But the truest answer to the charge lies in this: that for Judaism there is no dogmatic teaching about matters of faith which is independent of ethics and of morality, no mystery without commandment, no Far without Near, no value in the next world without the value of this world. Without convinced belief in ourselves, in our moral personality and its task, faith in God as well as faith in the certainty of atonement would remain empty and without beginning. The moral personality is revealed only in its activity upon earth. Man brings God into the world; he sanctifies the world by sanctifying God in it. He realizes the good, that which should be. Thus life becomes duty: *you are to live*. Existence cannot be

something valueless, useless or deceptive, cannot be intended for man to save himself from it, and flee from it. The great idea of the kingdom of God, the idea that man should prepare a place for God upon earth in order that the earth might become His sanctuary, formed ever anew its imagery.

From the standpoint of a "Hellenic" philosophy, an optimism which seeks only for earthly days and hours, the opposite charge has been brought against Judaism, namely, that it does not affirm this world strongly enough, and that it allows yearning eyes to wander too much beyond the life of earth. In dealing with this charge, we might quote Goethe's saying "that those who have no hope in another world are already dead in this world". But the true answer here again is that in Judaism there is no belief in ourselves without a convinced faith in God and without the certainty of atonement which such a faith provides; no commandment without mystery, no near without far. In other words, Judaism recognizes no ethics independent of religious faith. Faith or belief in ourselves would remain baseless and aimless without faith or belief in God, in God who brings man into the world, in order that in the world he may choose his life. We can believe in ourselves only if we are convinced that we are divine, created in the image of God, that our task is infinite, and that we are to be holy as the Lord our God is holy. Only he who looks beyond his earthly existence truly knows his existence; only he who penetrates beyond his existence truly lives in it, lives in the whole of his existence, and not simply in its successive days and years, lives with his whole heart, and in the wholeness of deed. Only he who hears the Unconditioned, perceiving in every duty the word of God, and performing that duty out of his spiritual experience of the law of God, — no "volunteer of morality", but a man of the commandment, — only he who, therefore, obeys God more than men and circumstances, the One more than the many, and so neither turns back nor turns aside, but walks in the way of God and returns to it, only he who in such wise believes in God, believes also in himself. It is the idea of the *Mitzvah*, the conception of duty, as the commandment of God, which alone apprehends life from its depths unto its ends with ever fresh preciseness and conviction.

This world and the world beyond find their reconciliation in such a faith in ourselves. Man knows that he is the child of God. To that man life is a possession and a commandment, since it comes from God, the Creator and Commander. The meaning of the duty of life and the duty contained in that meaning, the depth of the task and the task which the depth reveals, the perspicuous which becomes ever again the significant, the eternal symbol, and the significant which becomes ever again the perspicuous, the constant commandment: that is the spiritual language of Jewish optimism. That man who is conscious both of the mystery and of the commandment, the one in the other, is the man of Jewish piety. Through Judaism the conception of human existence received a *new value* which it can never thereafter lose. In the faith of man in himself, as it has been won by the Jewish soul, life acquires the strength to possess and to choose itself, its eternal significance and its moral freedom.

### FAITH IN OUR NEIGHBOUR

The essential features of faith in our neighbour have already become manifest in what has been shown to be the true basis of faith in ourselves. We cannot attribute to ourselves that high nobility, which we consider to be ours in virtue of its source, without also attributing it implicitly to others. Were it not essentially theirs, it could not be ours. We are created in the image of God; we are the children of God; and that which *we* are, they are as well. The source of our life, and the way which we are commanded to follow, are also theirs. The recognition of ourselves and the recognition of them are inseparable; they are one and the same. The religious conception of "man" necessarily implies the conception of fellow man or "neighbour", and the latter is likewise one of the great discoveries of Israelite genius. Judaism created the fellow-man or "neighbour", and with it the conception of humanity in its true sense, in the sense of respecting the life of our neighbour, of esteem for human dignity, of reverence for the Divine in all who wear the face of man.

In Judaism "neighbour" is inseparable from "man". I and my neighbour constitute in Judaism a religious and ethical unit.



Fundamentally, any opposition between me and my neighbour is impossible. Here too, as in all the conceptions of Judaism, the unity, with all its tension, with all its simultaneity of far and near, arises out of the contrast. My neighbour is the other man, and yet he is not the other; he is different from me, and yet the same; he is separated from me, and yet united with me. All that is comprised in the meaning of the word existence: place and vocation, craving and longing, have separated him from me, his life from mine. Yet everything which is contained in the word existence: content and form, source and aim of life, lead him to me, bring his life into mine. The meaning and value, the creation and task, of his life and of mine are not to be separated. He is understood by me only if, like me, he is apprehended as the image of God, as the man of God. In the belief in the One God, the meaning of his life, as of mine, is revealed. He is the other, but the covenant of God with me is at the same time the covenant of God with him, and therefore the covenant which links me with him. In Judaism there is no "man" without "fellow man", no faith in God without faith in neighbour as well as in myself. Thus one of the Rabbis of the generation following the destruction of the Temple, Ben Asai, referred to the sentence concerning man being created in the image of God as the great fundamental principle of the Torah. "Ben Asai said, 'This is the history of man: when God created man, He made him in His image' — this sentence bears the weight of the whole Torah."

The recognition which we owe to our neighbour is, therefore, absolute and unlimited; for it is based entirely upon the fact that he is a man, and therefore my fellow man, a being such as I, with a dignity equal to my own. The command in Leviticus, which Akiba called the determining sentence of the Bible, and which is usually rendered as: "Love thy neighbour as thyself", means in its truest sense: Love thy neighbour, for he is as thou. The words "as thou" constitute the essence of the sentence. The conception of the fellow man is contained in it: he is "as thou"; he is essentially the same as thou; thou and he are, as human beings, one. The utterance is neither mere philosophy, nor enthusiastic sentimentality, but unqualified commandment, the distinct demand that we are to honour in our fellow man him who is even as we

are. We are not to esteem him because he does or is this or that, but simply because he is a man. *His* worth consists in just that which constitutes *our* worth; his worth has its deep foundation, and rises to a lofty goal; it is infinite, even as ours. We can only feel reverence for ourselves if we also feel reverence for him; God made him as He made us. Thus the prophet said: "Have we not all *one* father? Hath not *one* God created us? Why do we deal treacherously every man against his brother, by profaning the covenant of our fathers?" One of the Rabbis of the Talmud, Ben Soma, expressed the idea in a single short sentence: "Honour is to honour man." Ben Asai, Ben Soma's contemporary, in order to make the "as thou" of the love our neighbour rise to its full height, said on the same lines: "Do not say: because I am despised, my neighbour may also be despised as I am; because I am condemned, my neighbour may also be condemned with me." One of the teachers after him, Rabbi Tanchuma, adds in explanation: "If you do so, know who it is whom you despise: he who was created in the image of God".

Our duty to our neighbour cannot be more eloquently emphasized than by saying that in all our actions towards man the *honour of God* is involved. A biblical proverb said: "He that oppresses the poor reproaches his Maker: but he that honours Him has mercy on the needy." The same idea is expressed in an ancient interpretation of the commandment of love of neighbour. "I am the Lord, I have created man for my honour." We show faithfulness to God if "we protect and guard His child"; so it is said in one of Akiba's parables. In every man we see the child of God. Everyone, as the Hebrew Bible declares, in a word so rich in meaning, is "our brother", "our neighbour". Every member of our family, every member of our tribe, or of our people, is our brother, and in a special sense they are so called: but not they only are our brothers: every man is our brother. He is so by *virtue of God*, through God, and therefore absolutely, and independently of any qualification or condition. It is not our affection or goodwill which makes him "our brother", it is not just the effect of a social institution or a state constitution, but God has made him so, God conferred the title on him. Through God every man is our fellow. We must acknowledge him as that,

if we would acknowledge God. He is our brother, our neighbour, even if in our lives he is very far from us and unconnected with us. That is why the Bible can speak of "thy brother, even if thou know him not", or again "thy brother.... though he be a stranger and sojourner". The poor man who comes before you is "thy poor", "thy needy"; the stranger who abides with you is "thy stranger". We are all related by God to each other, "the Lord is the maker of us all."

God made us so. To be a man means for everybody to be a fellow man. In Judaism every gift becomes a task, every fact a duty. It becomes, therefore, a definite ethical commandment: you are to be a fellow man, a man towards other men. That means to say that, by my will and my decision, my deed and my fulfilment, I too am to make as my fellow man the man beside me whom God created as my fellow man. By my choice and my duty I must make actual what is already actual to God. Here again is one of those paradoxes of Judaism, the unity in the contradiction between content and form, the unity of the contradiction that something already exists by God's decree, and is yet to come into existence by the act of man. So it is here: the "other" man is my fellow man because God made him such; his being so is his gift from God. Yet it is my deed which is to make him my fellow man to me, my deed which, first, is to cause him to become such. That which exists becomes a commandment. We must concede and grant to the fellow man everything by reason of which he becomes the fellow man beside us, our neighbour; in our actions we must recognize him as the man whom God has placed by our side, so that he should live with us. We must let him enter into our life. Here again our action effects a unity, the ethical unity between man and his fellow man.

This respect which we owe to our neighbour is *not an isolated single commandment*, not a commandment among other commandments. Rather does it represent the whole content of morality, the whole richness of that which God asks of us. It signifies the quintessence of duty. For in Judaism the content of all religiousness is that we serve God and love Him, and give our very selves to Him. But when we say "give our very selves to God", we can give Him only that wherein we are free, wherein we can make

free decisions, namely, the good and the right which we do. This good can only be accomplished in our actions towards our neighbour — as a saying of the Talmud puts it: "Love God in the human beings whom He has created." It is in our relations with our neighbour that our freedom acquires the abundance of its tasks, and our duty the distinctness of its aim. It is a way to God if we seek our human brother; in relation to him we prove our piety and our fear of God. The comprehensiveness of this demand was stressed by a leading Talmudic teacher, Hillel, and by Akiba after him; he declared this inward recognition of our neighbour to be the "essence of the Torah", the commandment in which everything is included. The same thing is implied in that oft repeated admonition, in which the Rabbis seek to explain the meaning of duty to God: we are to walk in the ways of God by doing good, by striving to be just, compassionate and merciful, like God. The service of God consists in what we do to our neighbour. In Judaism social action is religiousness, and religiousness implies social action.

In Judaism, therefore, without our fellow man there is no piety. The life of the solitary individual is looked upon as a mere piece of patchwork, as a life which lacks life's most essential feature, namely, service to the fellow man; it has its place, but not its way; it has its straitness, in which it may find itself, but not its breadth in which it can fulfil itself. Where "God and the soul, and nothing else", as St. Augustine said, constitute the whole and the true content of religion, there religion is merely a religion of redemption, which at bottom means the selfish religion of the man who knows only himself and his redeemer, and is concerned only with the care of his soul and its salvation. This egoistic faith was unable to take shape in Judaism; no blissful cognition, no entranced rapture, no assuredness of grace, can replace or set aside in it the commandment to regard one's brother man as one's own self. The piety of him who remains alone, and concerned only with himself, is to Judaism a contradiction in terms; no hermit could be called holy. The religious spirit of the language of Judaism expressed this idea in words of its own. It incorporated the conception of the pious man in that of the *Zaddik*, or "righteous man", and in that of the *Chassid*, or "loving man", in

short, in the conception of him only, who fulfils his duty towards his fellow men.

That which we are to do to our neighbour is thus lifted out of the region of a mere relationship between one man and another, which assorts and selects our fellow men according to goodwill, loveliness or affection; it is exalted into the sphere of the established relationship with God, which is common to all, and thus unites all. It is not this or that human being, who is connected with us by this or that accidental fact, but *man* as such who stands before us, and every human being has a claim upon us. No preliminary conditions are necessary. Even our enemy may and must demand the fulfilment of our duty. Though he is our enemy, he does not cease to be our fellow man. "If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink." "If thou meet thine enemy's ox or his ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him again. If thou see the ass of him that hateth thee lying under his burden, do not forbear to help him, thou shalt surely help him to unload the ass." Every human being is, as our neighbour, entitled to our help, to our mercifulness, entitled to become our human brother through us. What we owe to him, and what we do for him, are not based upon the uncertainty of our goodwill, but upon the definite right which every man has by virtue of God.

All our duties to our neighbour come within the commandment of *justice*, the domain of absolute obligation. Justice, according to the development of this conception in Judaism, does not merely consist in the avoidance or prevention of all interference with the rights of others. It is something more, a wholly positive and social commandment; it is the genuine and willing recognition of our fellow man, the realisation of his equality and of the *rights of man*, which God has given him. The rights of man do not mean merely our own rights, but the rights of the other man, our neighbour, the rights which he may claim from us. He has a claim upon us; whatever we grant to him is our obligation and his right. It is his inalienable right which cannot be lost, which surpasses all other valid "rights", and which nobody can either increase or diminish; it is his human right by reason of which he may and must demand of us, in our motives and deeds alike, that

we allow him in his life to belong to our life. If we fulfil this obligation, then we are practising justice towards him, Jewish justice. Here again religious terminology supplies the characteristic expression. Judaism produced the word „*Zedakah*“, the full meaning of which does not permit of translation, since it connotes both justice and beneficence, fusing them into a unity, or more accurately, it describes our good deeds as something which our neighbour is entitled to *claim*, and in the fulfilment of which we have done nothing more than what our duty towards him continually demands of us. *Zedakah* is positive, religious and social justice, justice with its demanding, urging and Messianic element. This conception was formed from the idea of One God, one human race, and one abiding human right.

By this emphasis upon rights, that which we are bound to grant to our neighbour is raised above the inconstancy of the transitory, above mere emotional excitement, and is set upon the solid ground of clear duty and sober deed. Warm hearts are always to be found, men who, in their warm emotion, would like to make the whole world happy, but who have never tried to carry out the prosaic experiment of bringing real blessing to one human being. It is easy to be enthusiastic about human love, and to shed tears of emotion. But it is more difficult to do good to somebody solely because he is a human being, and to recognise his human rights by action. He who approaches us in the name of his human rights demands definite ethical action, for which mere general goodwill on the part of him who is able to look on with sentimental calm while human beings perish before his eyes, or lie oppressed and enthralled upon the ground, can be no substitute. With how much has mere love of neighbour effected a compromise or been able to agree! All human love must have its roots in the ethical and social will, in the inward recognition of man, in the vital respect of his rights, in what is meant by *Zedakah*, or it is nothing but unfruitful sentimentality. *Zedakah* is primary and fundamental. It alone makes a clear and irrefutable demand, admitting of no evasions or deviations. One is reminded of some words of Kant which clearly reveal the very kernel of the whole matter. "Both the love of man and respect for his rights are duties, but the former is only conditional, while

the latter is unconditional and entirely obligatory. He who would revel in the sweet feeling of benevolence should first be quite sure that he has not neglected the duty which is obligatory. Politics can make an easy agreement with morality under its first-mentioned aspect (as ethics), in order to deliver up the rights of man into the hands of his 'superiors'; but under the second aspect of morality (as Law), instead of bowing the knee as it should, politics finds it advisable not to enter into negotiations, to deny indeed all reality to morality, and to interpret all duties in the light of mere benevolence. . . ."

The fact that this conception of justice, as created by Judaism, was not allowed to assume a concrete form during all the centuries of the great mediaeval world, provided a long and fateful epoch, a European epoch, with an historical character which constituted its very fate. Internal reasons were responsible for that. Justice in its essence was placed within the sphere of faith, and "to be made just" by the grace of God was the point of supreme consequence. The right which was granted to the believer through his faith in God took away meaning and content from the right which man should grant. That which the deed should realise retired behind that which was granted by grace. The idea of justice was thus bereft of its demanding element, or at least weakened in regard to it; it lacked passion and yearning, the spaciousness of task and promise. It remained limited, sometimes to a merely civic, sometimes to a merely juristic and political, morality, and hence it was always inclined to compromise with what happened to exist, or to bow to the powers that were. In that benevolence and goodwill, in that duty, so rich in content and yet so "conditioned" and so easily satisfied, there was set up a standard for the relationship between man and man. In it the idea of the rights of man was lulled to sleep and lost; the silencing of justice by benevolence has always been fatal to justice. The idea that God demands right and justice upon earth, making them the task of human existence, that Jewish idea of justice, that stirring and impelling principle, was unable to develop. When, in the epoch of "enlightenment", it had the chance to make its way, it was for a long time able to develop only in the limited form of toleration, that hybrid of justice and almsgiving, and it was only later on that it assumed

the clarity and distinctness of a command, in the definite demand for the inward recognition of our fellow man. In this recognition there is contained the creative element which shapes life; in it is found that holy discontent, the driving leaven in human society.

In Judaism we can make a test of the creative power of these ideas regarding the rights of man by seeing how they found expression in *positive statutes*. We see this first of all in the place which the list of religious duties in the Pentateuch assigns to the *stranger* (resident alien). In all instances where our obligations towards the needy are set forth in definite laws — and these are very numerous both in the Hebrew Bible and in the Talmud — the stranger (resident alien) is expressly included. He is classed with the Levite, the fatherless and the widow. "And the Levite (because he has no part nor inheritance with thee), and the stranger (resident alien), and the fatherless and the widow, who are within thy gates, shall come, and shall eat and be satisfied; that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hand which thou doest." "And thou shalt rejoice in thy feast thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy manservant, and thy maidservant, and the Levite, the stranger (resident alien), and the fatherless, and the widow, that are within thy gates." "It shall belong to the stranger (resident alien), to the widow, and to the orphan." All these are constantly recurring words; they constitute an expansion of the saying: "he shall live with thee". "Ye shall have *one* manner of law, as well for the stranger (resident alien), as for one of your own country; for I am the Lord your God"; that is the concluding sentence of the warning against all injustice, — a warning intended to protect him too, him above all; for the injustice which is done to him who can only appeal to the rights of man, is above all an outrage against humanity. "God loves the stranger" (resident alien); in these words is expressed just that which he, who seeks protection, may claim in the name of God; we protect in the stranger (resident alien) him who is loved by God, the child of God. The various statutes of duty towards him are thus fused and unified in the great commandment: "thou shalt love the stranger (resident alien) as thyself". Here too the words "as thyself", in the full inwardness of their meaning, imply: "he is as thou". In order to give this "as thou" a personal reference,



the lot of the stranger (resident alien) is linked with the lot of Israel: "Thou shalt love the stranger (resident alien) as thyself, for ye were strangers (resident aliens) in the land of Egypt; I am the Lord your God." The expression "stranger" (resident alien) takes on a special note in the Hebrew Bible, since man, whose mortal existence comes and goes, is called the pilgrim, the stranger (resident alien) upon earth. God says: "For the land is mine, for ye are strangers (resident aliens) and sojourners with me", and man replies in the prayer: "A stranger (resident alien) am I with thee, and a sojourner as all my fathers were". An ancient Talmudic passage expounds these words thus: "Ye are strangers with me, that is to say: do not behave as though you were the only people who matter".

In this duty towards the stranger (resident alien) the absolute duty of man was most clearly perceived. The stranger (resident alien) taught the conception of humanity; in him every man as such was ever anew clearly recognized, and even as it were discovered, as a member of the whole human race. How firm this understanding was, is evidenced by the fact that it created a political conception, that of the *Noachides*, — a conception which legally substantiates the independence of the moral law and of ethical equality from all national and confessional limitations. A Noachide, or son of Noah, is every inhabitant of a country, irrespective of belief (apart from an acknowledgment of Monotheism<sup>1</sup>) or nationality, who performs the most elementary duties of humanity and citizenship. According to the Rabbinic ordinance, every Noachide is entitled not only to toleration, but also to recognition; he is legally on a level with the Jewish citizen; he is "our stranger". The conception of right, so far as the state is concerned, is thereby emancipated; it is lifted out of all political and ecclesiastical narrowness, and placed upon a purely human basis. Therewith a fundamental conception of "natural" right is established, and the great scholars of the seventeenth century, who made fresh contributions to the "Law of Nations", men like Hugo de Groot and John Selden, learned with admiration about the stranger of the Talmud, and incorporated him with gratitude into their systems. In their ideas about "natural" law and the law of nations he occupies an important place.

<sup>1</sup>) Addition of Translator.

That the recognition, as legally ordained in Judaism, of the man of a different belief and race found also its religious expression, has already been shown in connection with the proof given of the universalistic and humane character of Judaism. This quality causes also the inward respect for the stranger, the respect for his soul. In relation to the religious belief of the non-Jew a famous saying was uttered, which was very comprehensive, and gradually became a sort of article of faith: "the pious among all nations will have a share in the life to come". Piety or righteousness it thus made independent of particular religious denominations. Sympathetic understanding of the stranger is intensified into a recognition of his moral and religious worth, a recognition of that which can constitute the innermost being of every human creature. To everybody there lies open within his life, and within the sphere of his belief (subject to the acknowledgment of One God<sup>1</sup>), the path to piety. Specific humanity becomes the decisive factor, the determining factor in this world and in the world to come. In eternal life there will be no special place for the stranger, only a place for the pious and the righteous.

The second connection in which in Judaism the importance of the conception of the rights of man is revealed is the attitude assumed in ancient Judaism towards slavery. The very fact that for the Israelite slave the seventh year, and the year of jubilee, were years of liberation, lent to slavery a novel appearance. A system of slavery, with all its sad incidents and appurtenances, as it appears in the history of civilisation both in ancient and modern times, remained foreign to Judaism. This is connected with the fact that its general conception of life has endowed labour with a religious and ethical consecration. Man is appointed by God to labour. Such esteem for labour was unknown in classical times; to the Greek, labour was something mean, and unworthy of the free man. When Aristotle justifies slavery by suggesting that it is absolutely necessary in order to spare the citizen for ever from mean and every-day labour and make possible for him the true life, which consists in noble leisure, he is giving expression to an entirely Greek point of view; not unless tools begin to move themselves, like the miraculous creations of Hephaistos, would

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<sup>1</sup>) Addition of Translator.

slavery be rendered superfluous. Judaism preaches the blessing of labour; it sounds like a contradiction of the Greek attitude, when one of the most distinguished of the old Rabbis declared: "Love work, and hate lordship." Where the dignity of labour is appreciated, and he who "enjoys the labour of his hands" is considered a happy man, there the curse of slavery is destroyed. In Judaism labour is inseparable from man. With the sentence, "Man goes forth unto his work and to his labour until the evening", the Psalmist described the place of man in creation. There is, strictly speaking, no specific expression for the slave in the language of Judaism. The word which describes him includes everyone who works and serves, and also him who serves the One God "with all his heart and with all his soul". And it may here be pointed out that there is something fresh and effective in the juxtaposition so frequently used in the Pentateuch: "thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy manservant, and thy maid-servant"; the great idea of a big community of labour is contained in it.

Yet the ethical uplifting of the slave finds a still safer basis in the belief in man. The principle that we all have *one* father concerns him too, and is expressly extended to him: "If I did despise the cause of my slave or of my maid-servant, when they contended with me; what then should I do if God rose up? And if He summoned me to the judgment, what should I answer Him? Did not He that made me make him? And did not one God fashion us both?" Here the Bible speaks of that which every human being, including the slave, is before God; it speaks too about his human rights. When all men are equal in the eyes of God, the master is no more important than the slave; when conceited condescension towards barbarians or towards low and inferior nations, is not permitted, there, (to use Greek terminology), can scarcely be any "born slaves" or "nations of slaves". The enslaving of an Israelite servant necessarily appears to the Israelite a defamation of his own past, a denial of that which God once did for Israel, when he brought it forth from the house of bondage, out of Egypt. Just as for the sake of the stranger (resident alien) the Israelites were reminded that they were "strangers (resident aliens) in the land of Egypt", so also for the sake of the slave they were exhorted to "remember that thou wast a bond-

servant in the land of Egypt". The destiny and the dignity of their fathers demand that in the slave they should honour the human being, upon whom God looks down.

Most significant and revealing are the legal conceptions dealing with the position of the slave. In the Greek and Roman world, to say nothing of the old eastern states ruled by despots, the slave was considered to be a *thing*; he was not a subject of the law, but merely an object of the law. In the *corpus juris* he belonged to the chapter devoted to the law of things. To the Israelite law the slave is a person entitled to rights, one who stands before his master with definite legal claims. The master is therefore *not* considered to be the owner of the slave, but only his possessor. He has not a full and unlimited freedom of dealing with him, but merely a restricted and conditioned power of disposal over him. It is thus established that serfdom is not a relationship which has its foundations in the general order of law, incorporating acknowledged rights, but that it is merely a temporary form of domestic service. Thus the principle of slavery is thereby destroyed.

The extent to which judicial personality was assured to the slave is most clearly revealed in the law governing injury done to the slave by his master. "And if a man smite the eye of his slave, or the eye of his maid, and destroy it; he shall let him go free for his eye's sake. And if he smite out his slave's tooth, or his maid-servant's tooth; he shall let him go free for his tooth's sake." This ordinance is based upon the so-called *jus talionis*, the law of retaliation, in the form it ultimately assumed in Israelite law. That is to say, it is based upon the obligation to render appropriate compensation, a proper pecuniary indemnification, to the person upon whom a bodily or other wrong has been inflicted. The ancient legal maxim says: Breach for breach, eye for eye, tooth for tooth. This principle of orderly retaliation is, therefore, in its basic sense, an expression of the equality of all, and it ends therefore with the words: "Ye shall have one manner of law, as well for the stranger (resident alien) as for the home-born." One person's wound is to be considered as serious as another's. It was transcribed by Michaelis, Professor at Goettingen, thus: "The judges are to be reminded that they have always to regard the distinguished and the humble as equals, that they

must esteem the tooth of the peasant as much as the tooth of the nobleman, especially since the peasant has to eat crusts, whilst the nobleman is able to eat rolls." In the case of one person, the slave, an exception is indeed made. He is not only equal to his master, but is even privileged. Should his master hurt him in the slightest degree, if he only knocks out his tooth, he goes free immediately on account of it; so it is laid down in the law of slavery. All that is given to the master is: "tooth for tooth"; but the slave gets a higher compensation: freedom for a tooth. He is granted special consideration; the need of legal protection for him is most obvious and urgent. Just as the stranger (resident alien) produced the clearest conception of man as part of mankind, so too the slave led to the full understanding of the judicial personality of every individual, whoever he might be.

His equality received, moreover, a religious, as well as a legal, emphasis. The Sabbath, as the day of rest and recreation, — so it is frequently said in the Hebrew Bible, — was instituted for the sake of the slave. "But the seventh day is a sabbath unto the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor thy stranger (resident alien) that is within thy gates; that thy man-servant and thy maid-servant may rest as well as thou. And thou shalt remember that thou wast a slave in the land of Egypt, and the Lord thy God brought thee out thence by a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm; therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day." Thus God ordains the Sabbath for the sake of the slave. It is not the master who gives him this day of rest, but God who grants it him. The weekly Sabbath exists for the sake of the rights of man. And likewise the festival of rejoicing was given also to the slave; "And thou shalt rejoice in thy feast, thou and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy man-servant, and thy maid-servant . . ." It must be admitted that the Romans, as other nations, had occasional festivals for their slaves. But there is an essential and great difference between there being granted as charity to the enslaved two or three brief days of recreation in a year of oppression and misery, and there being established as an inviolate, religious right of the slave, granted to

him by God, the holiest institution of the year, "the sign between the Lord and the children of Israel". The one cannot be compared with the other.

In Greek and Roman literature we come across manifold utterances of tender and heartfelt consideration for slaves. The feeling of humanity, which, by the influence of Stoicism, gained ground among the best of the people, had a beneficial effect also as regards the slave. But these nobler conceptions, apart from the fact that they often were limited to books and to the fashionable ideas of the day, or formed the subject of unfruitful philosophising, were simply the convictions of a small circle. They did not become what they became in Judaism; they did not become "Torah". So the contrast between them and all those horrors and atrocities, in which wanton idleness gave vent to its license against those unfortunate creatures, who, according to Juvenal, are "not really human beings", is not at all astonishing. What Israel's Bible teaches about the slave became, as Torah, the possession of the *whole* people, and because of this the several commandments gain their abiding power and their faculty of fresh growth. These teachings and commandments are common religious property, which became progressively deepened and ennobled, as a glance into the later literature can show. They shaped life: the whole difference between the definite humanity of a commanding religion of life, and the abstract humanity of any philosophy, however enlightened, becomes apparent. To indicate the increasingly vital manner in which the relation to the slave and servant class developed, it is sufficient — neglecting certain narrower conceptions — to point to several important Talmudic laws, and, what is even more important, to many a feature of the daily life of that period. They show with what tender consideration it was sought to spare the slave all mortification and shame, as well as all humiliating and unnecessary work. Rabbi Jose praised the honest slave for being the "good and faithful man who lives by his labour". Slavery, in the real sense of the word, did not exist among the Jews. Israel was the only community to possess a civilisation which did not rest upon the shoulders of slaves, and thus created for the first time a truly ethical civilisation.

The third factor which bears witness to the living power of understanding of the rights of man is the social legislation of the Bible. It starts with the idea of *Zedakah*, of justice. The basic idea upon which all the social laws rest is that all who belong to the domain of a State form an ethical unit; they are members of an ethical community of duty. All have to be responsible for the human wants of the individual who is in need; they are bound to make themselves familiar with his wants. Whoever lives in our midst is not merely to live beside us physically, but, as it is so often and significantly said, he is to "live *with* us": ethically united with us, and humanly bound up with us. To the ethical personality corresponds the ethical community. Beside and above all other tasks of the State, there are the human and social tasks. The common ground which supports us and our fellow man is also the ground of our responsibility towards him. It is to be not merely an external, but an ethical living together. For that alone can unite all, and can cause all persons to belong to one another. The ethical bond gives to all human groups and strata the true meaning both of their individual lives and their common lives, with their value and their aim. This bond gives the State its ethical existence, and therewith its right of existence before God; the true state is the state of *Zedakah* that real theocracy, that *civitas dei*, in which everybody, whoever may be his father, can, and is to, have his place. Everyone who dwells in the land is to dwell with all his fellows, and they are to dwell with him.

Thus is created the ideal and true conception of society. Every human whole is an ethical whole, and every individual is regarded as a member of a community of men. Not state or economic interests, but human tasks and human accomplishments are the primary ties which bind together the inhabitants of a land. They are not merely a community of citizens, or of classes and ranks, but a community of human beings. Therefore all duties are concerned with man as such, and therefore with the stranger (resident alien) too: he who lives among us has a claim upon us; when he needs us, we are to be at his side; if he is poor, we are to support him. That is the duty of all, as irrefutable and as earnest as any civic or political demand. It is these tasks and duties which first create the human community, and therefore

the community which forms the State; they constitute the path which leads to the understanding of the significance of the state, or political community, and of its task of existence. In Judaism, for the first time in the history of mankind, the social consciousness awoke, and was translated into deed. In these conceptions of Judaism, the social Messianic idea, the religious idea of human society and of its fulfilment, has ever found, directly or indirectly, nourishment and invigoration.

The social demand is an essential and necessary feature of religion in Judaism. It was manifested as the principle of Jewish faith in regard to our fellow man: our human brother, and that is everybody, has claims upon us. In the Book of Proverbs it is said of the poor man that the good which we are to render him is due to him; to deny it him means to withhold from him his due. It is also described as "robbing" him, in the words, "Rob not the poor, because he is poor"; to do so would mean to take from him that which is given to him as his possession by God, the right to live as our fellow man. He who wants to stand alone, though he may not claim anything for himself, but yet, on the other hand, does nothing for others, commits a sin against human right and human dignity. An old Talmudic sentence judges him thus. "He who says, What is mine is mine, and what is thine is thine, has a character like that of Sodom." Here it is said quite definitely what justice really is. He who does nothing wicked against his neighbour, who does not steal from him, does not deceive, wound or injure him, has not yet acted justly. He who can say no more than that stands before God like the people of Sodom, which was destroyed on account of its sins. "Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and prosperous ease was in her and her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy." No man is just unless he *does* something for his neighbour.

It is this trend of thought which in Judaism found expression in a series of social laws, which most definitely command justice towards the poor and the weak. They are directed against all oppression, and against all abuse of power on the part of the rich and the prosperous. Against such ills the prophet pronounced his "woe": "Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field



to field, till there be no room, that ye be made to dwell alone in the midst of the land!" It was from this spirit that the Biblical statutes derived their strength. They are chiefly intended to prevent complete and lasting impoverishment, the formation of a class entirely without possessions; and just as the civilization of Israel is not based upon slavery, so it is not based upon a proletariat. If anybody had been compelled, from sheer necessity, to sell the heritage of his fathers, he is not to be obliged to lose it for ever. A "year of freedom", the year of jubilee, was established in order to effect an equal redistribution, an equilibrium in the most important possessions. Even in regard to property and the apportionment of the soil, an ever fresh beginning, or return, was to be granted; a day of reconciliation as to property, on which all tension and all contradiction were to be set at rest.

But so long as a person was poor, he was not forgotten and abandoned. Nobody, indeed, was really to consider himself to be poor, seeing that he belonged to a human community. The duties of property were emphasized very definitely; through them the blessings of property were to be felt; through them property was to be given its consecration, its Sabbatarian quality. It is with the land and the soil that these statutes are primarily concerned. For the true owner of the soil and all its fruits is God, and so the poor too have some claim upon it. They are God's wards, they are "His people", and a portion of the harvest is rightly theirs. But the social command applies equally well to every other object of possession. It is our *duty* to make a loan to a person in distress, and if he is unable to repay it within a specified time, to remit his debt entirely. It is our *duty* to befriend the poor, and to offer them whatever they require. They are to share with us in all our joys, and thereby cause them to be genuine joys. Whenever a time of rejoicing is being contemplated, it is always to be intended for the poor man too.

It is in respect of the poor that we are best able to realize what man is entitled to expect as a member of human society; it is in relation to them that we can first and foremost understand that the command to be a fellow man makes upon us a very definite demand. Poverty is the great social rebuke, the contradiction to the idea of a human social unity. Through poverty all social

shortcomings, all social evils, cry out to us. Through suffering this contradiction enters into human life. Through our own suffering and distress it enters into our own life, and through the distress and misery of our fellow men into the life of the community. It is a commandment in Judaism that, in the face of suffering, a man should devote himself to creative and reformatory work, never ceasing to serve God. He is morally to overcome distress, his own and also that of others. No more than our own must we accept the misery of others as mere fate, or allow ourselves to feel at rest towards it as if it were some ordained fact, which makes us forget to answer or even to question. We must not imitate the legends of Buddha who regards poverty, disease and death, as the inevitable lot of man. We are to regard every suffering of our neighbour as our own individual concern; through our action in relation to it we are to prove our ethical freedom. Thus in its social outlook, too, Judaism is opposed to the conception of fate. This attitude is primarily applicable to the misery which we witness in poverty. In poverty there speaks to us, not some language of fate, but the demand of a definite duty. The poor man constitutes our neighbour in the most special sense of the commandment. He is the man who has no place amid the earth and its material goods, but who *has* a place before God; he is just simply a man. Through him humanity turns appealingly to us, bare, naked humanity, one might say, asking for human fellowship. That is why in the language of Judaism the word "poverty" has a religious note — the fact that it has no term for a "beggar" is in itself significant. There vibrates in the word the sound of humility. The word "poor" is a word which the Bible pronounces with devoutness and with reverence, as if in holy awe. Moreover, in the case of the poor, just as in the case of the slave and the resident alien, Israel is reminded of its own lot, of its own oppression upon earth. The affliction of the poor is also Israel's affliction, the dignity of the poor is also its dignity, and the solace of the poor its solace. "When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them." "For the Lord hath comforted his people, and will have mercy upon his afflicted." The Biblical sayings about the poor contain, they too, a messianic note.

The history of Judaism is evidence that these ideas did not stagnate. Judaism did not rest content with what was laid down by the ancient law, but it sought in ever fresh precepts to do justice by the poor. For this was their object: that which was offered to him was not to be alms, but *his right*. Therein God's rights were to be acknowledged at the same time. For in doing good to the weak a man is but paying a debt which is owed to God. Hence the command, in the "Sayings of the Fathers", of our duty to the needy: "Give to God that which is His, for you and all that is yours belong to God." It was this which was proclaimed by the Prophets to be the true service of God. "Is not this the fast that I have chosen? To loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?" "He did judgment and justice . . . he judged the cause of the poor and needy . . . Was not this to know me? saith the Lord." It is unnecessary to adduce the abundance of detailed instances in later periods, for they are all contained in a sentence which was incorporated in the code of civil law, the Mishnah: "If a man be found slain in the field, and it be not known who has slain him, then, so it is stated in the Torah, the elders of the nearest city shall come forth, and they shall say: Our hands have not shed his blood, neither have our eyes seen it. (Deuteronomy XXI. 7). Had then the elders of the city been accused of having shed his blood? But the words: Our hands have not shed this blood, mean: This man was not within our reach, and we did not send him away hungry. Neither have our eyes seen him: that means, he was not within the range of our vision, and we did not leave him alone." These Talmudic sentences mean: he who does not show concern for and befriend his fellow man is as if his hands had shed blood, and as if his eyes had looked on.

The various provisions of all those laws may be inadequate for the changed requirements, and the new social and economic structure, of later periods, but that does not detract from their merit of having sought for the first time to permeate the life of

the whole community with social feeling. In them the great social task of humanity became realized for the first time. Today, more specially, we draw near to them again, for the development of modern thought has explicitly adopted that ethical conception of society expressed in those old legal provisions. Notably are we brought close to them with the demand, ever now-a-days more strongly stressed, that religion ought to be "practical": in this demand men are treading the path which the social legislation of the Bible opened up, and which has never been abandoned by Judaism, — the path of *Zedakah*, of justice, which, starting from the conception of human rights, leads on to their fulfilment and to the realization of the rights of our fellow men, above all, of the servant, the resident alien and the poor.

In the course of the ages social thought struck out two paths. The one starts with the great seer and artist among the mathematical thinkers, with Plato. Here faith in the unfailing, all-effecting power of law, which creates the orders of society, and forces persons into them in order to educate them and to make them happy, governs everything. It becomes faith in the omnipotence of the State. The absolute State, which stands for everything, and which has, therefore, to be endowed with complete power, that it may mould the customs and morals of men, becomes the guarantee of perfection, the image of the desired future. When it is established, then the times are fulfilled, and the idea has become reality; the *civitas dei*, the State of God upon earth, is then established. Everything is, therefore, built upon the idea of the State, and its power, and its compulsion. As opposed to the State no room is left for the particular commandments which are directed to the individual; all room is denied to individual yearning and love, and to the right of independent seeking. Man is a being who has to be forced to be reasonable and happy, and this guiding principle is one with which every hierarchy, whether political or clerical, has always willingly agreed and connected itself. The final answer here is always the demand for a dictatorship, be it the dictatorship of philosophers, like Plato or Comte, or the dictatorship of the working class in more recent days, be it the "*coge intrare*", "compel them to enter" of the old church, or the "*cujus regio, ejus religio*", "to each country

its religion", of the Protestant and Catholic state. To use the hyperbole of Hobbes, the state ultimately becomes a leviathan, a monster which swallows up everything. The ideal of this trend in social thought is to fit men into a great whole, to educate them to that end. But behind this ideal there lurks a considerable pessimism in regard to the individual: man stands in need of compulsion from his birth to his death; the completely social man can only be brought into existence by the compelling power of an all-commanding, all-powerful state, the mathematical state.

The other path, which has only the word "social" in common with the former path, starts from the Bible. Everything here rests upon faith in man, on reverence for his freedom and its creative impulse, on the conviction that, despite all inequality, there is implanted in every human soul the capacity of doing good, and that the ethical task demands the help of every individual, connecting them all, and claiming them all for one another. Here optimism in regard to man is dominant, a religious and social confidence which expects and demands everything from him. Not the perfect state, with its perfect law, is here the only essential thing; but it is man with his deed, and with his power to create the good. In the social sphere, too, he is the strongest and the true reality, the reality by which the law gains its own reality. It is not the new state which produces the new human being, but rather that through the new human being a new society is shaped, — through ethical personality an ethical community. There cannot be such a thing as an ideal state established upon earth by means of ideal laws; man must gradually build up the kingdom of God upon earth, and extend its borders with every fresh righteous act which he performs. The Divine manifests itself in the community, when men fulfil the commandment of God in relation to one another. The idea of the "perfect state" is found here in the command which is directed to all men alike: "Ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." Greater than the law in which the state erects necessary restrictions, and sets up necessary claims, is the Torah, the commandment through which God calls to every single human being. Human action creates the human community. The social element is, therefore, based upon the rights of man, and so also the consequent respon-

sibility of one individual for the other is based upon the full acknowledgment of one man by the other. In the word "social" is involved not, primarily, the state, but the fellow man: the term has a greater reverence for the power of man than for the might of the law. The state is here only a state, if it is a *human* state, and not merely a *legal* state. The social element is, therefore, something infinite, an eternal problem, a task which can never be completed, a commandment which continually awaits its final fulfilment. The Platonic state, which has been constantly re-devised, aims at being a completed formation, a beginning which carries its end within itself; it is intolerant and dictatorial, like every theory. The state community, as demanded by Jewish thought, is not something complete, for there is no complete human being, but is rather something which has to be worked out ever anew, and ever more completely, in accordance with moral freedom, and clearing the way, like every divine commandment. Hence the social ideal points to the Messianic ideal. In Judaism, before the present stands always the admonishing future, the eternal task which has to be fulfilled by each generation, — the way to the goal, — that every act of man is to fashion his fellow man, so that in the fellowship between them God may reveal himself.

Although respectful recognition, by means of some definite act demanded by justice, is thus essential, and therewith our primary debt to our neighbour, although nothing, no mere benevolence or a heart full of love and sympathy can be substituted for it, yet it alone does not satisfy the ideal of faith in our fellow man. For the things for which the fellow man asks are not simply the needs of everyday life, which right action would suffice to give; he has also his emotions, which likewise ask for gratification, he has his innermost secret, his personal being, just like ourselves. He stands before us in order that we may, as one of the noblest expressions of the Bible puts it, "know his heart". Whatever we do for him, we must do also for his heart, for his heart's sake, and from the depths of our own heart. We must practise justice with our feelings also. If, perhaps, his physical needs call for nothing from us, there remains, nevertheless, that duty to his soul. It is this which Israel's religion calls the love of one's neighbour:

"Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." "Thou shalt love the stranger (resident alien) as thyself." It is the necessary perfection, the fulfilment, of "justice". Through it, that which we do for our neighbour is transformed from an outward action, based merely upon duty, into a deed of our personality; it becomes an act, which, as it were, is not simply done physically, but is wrought between soul and soul. Thus obligation is filled with warmth, with its inner value; as the Talmud says: "Justice is measured by the amount of love which it contains." Where obligation is, perhaps, not in place, love still remains. We must show it also to him who can, or must, do without our active help. It is impossible to describe more aptly what human love adds to good action — taking this word to represent "justice" in its fullest sense — than does yet another Talmudic sentence: "Beneficence can be rendered only to the living, love to the living and to the dead; beneficence is only rendered to the poor, love both to rich and to poor. Beneficence can be carried out only by our possessions, love is practised with our possessions and our very selves."

This sentence is preceded by another one: "Beneficence and love are as important as all the other commands of the Law together." Scarcely anything in Rabbinic literature is more emphatically stressed than these two virtues, and more especially the love of our neighbour. "Love is the beginning and the end of the Torah." "He who withholds love from his brother is like an idolator, like one who rejects the service of God." "Thus says the Torah: Take upon yourselves the kingdom of heaven, live with one another in the fear of God, and act towards one another in love." "This is the threefold sign of the Israelite: that he is merciful, chaste and loving." "Love thy neighbour as thyself" is, according to Akiba, "the great commandment of the Torah, which embraces all."

We must love our neighbour as ourselves; he must be to us what we are to ourselves, and his soul as important and as worthy of consideration as ours. All this is simply the outcome of our "knowledge" of his soul. To place oneself in the position of our neighbour, to understand his hope and his yearning, to appreciate the needs of his heart, and to penetrate into the joys and sorrows of his mind, that is the presupposition of all neighbourly love and compassion, of all sympathy with our fellow man. Its innermost

being is, therefore, contained in the principle which Hillel called the essence of the Law, from which all else follows: "Do not do unto others as you would not be done by." It was with justification that the old Aramaic version of the Bible, the Targum of Jonathan, translated the commandment to love our neighbour by those words. For it is the vital understanding of our neighbour which gives to love of neighbour its definiteness and assurance.

There was, indeed, good reason for Hillel's putting his maxim in the negative form. For the resolve not to hurt anybody is the beginning of all love of man. The other, the positive, aspect of the matter then follows of itself. If there be scarcely any virtue which can so easily become empty as the love of our neighbour, the reason is that we so often forget all that love is called upon *not* to do. In the realm of ethics it is the negative which has the hardest limits, the most definite demands; by recognizing, and attending to, what we ought *not* to do we learn what morality demands that we *should* do. This rule is valid for every approach to goodness: we begin by averting ourselves from, and turning against, evil. All love for the great begins with the loathing of the mean, all labour for the noble with resistance to the vulgar and the common. To do no wrong is the first and decisive step on the way to doing right. We can, too, always discover more easily what is *not* God's will, what impurity, immorality, and injustice are. All education starts, therefore, with forbidding. Not until we have ascertained from what we ought to *depart* are we able to discover our true selves. "To depart from evil is understanding." Hence the constant, imposing, "thou shalt not" of the Bible. Where it is absent — and how often has such been the case — everything evaporates only too soon in mere enthusiasm and talk. The commandment concerning the love of neighbour is, therefore, preceded by the negative ordinance: "thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people". According to the old Jewish view, it is already revenge, if we refrain from a good deed towards somebody, because he himself has not done good to us, and it is considered to be a grudge if the good deed is accompanied by self-righteous words. Before the commandment about revenge comes: "thou shalt not



hate thy brother in thy heart". According to the ancient Jewish interpretation, a hostile feeling already amounts to hatred.

With these last commands the love of neighbour is definitely extended to the enemy. It has already been pointed out that the duty of justice is absolute, thus including the enemy: we are to help him as often as he needs our support. With this duty towards the enemy, a harsh tension enters into our ethical relationship with our neighbour. My neighbour is my enemy; he is a human being, and therefore near to me, placed beside me, and yet he is opposed to me, he is humanly far from me; thus is he far and near at one and the same time. He is to be considered as my fellow man, and yet he does not desire to be my fellow man; he is united with me, and separated from me, at one and the same time. Moreover, the fact that he is an enemy can also signify an inner antithesis, which threatens to tear asunder the unity between man and fellow man. I see my enemy as a transgressor before me; that which I cast away out of the very depths of my being, that which I must fight, so that it may not be the victor, that which is inhuman, foreign to God, and hostile to God, stands before me in him. "Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate thee?" Yet in the man of wickedness I must acknowledge humanity, and in the enemy of God I must find the Divine.

This tension is overcome by the demand of justice. Even though that other is an enemy, not a fellow man, but an opponent, an enemy of the commandment, I must not be like him; I have to realize my life by the justice which I mete out to others, and thus also to him. The duty is absolute, and is imposed upon me as my duty. Therefore the enemy, however much he separates himself from me, is still bound up with me in the unity of man and fellow man. It is just specially in relation to him that we appreciate the full strength of the commandment of humanity, and thus it becomes possible that, as it is laid down by an old law, duty towards him takes precedence over duty towards the friend. To return evil for evil would mean to deny the commandment which is imposed upon us; it would mean that justice was subjected to the assumption of our infallibility in the infliction of punishment. "Am I in the place of God?" "Say not thou, I will recompense evil; but wait on the Lord, and he shall save thee."

It would mean the destruction of that which is our true life, of that in which our life is to find its fulfilment. As a simile in the Talmud says: "He who avenges himself, or bears a grudge, acts like somebody who has had one hand cut by a knife, and now sticks it into the other hand for revenge." With good reason do these conceptions all begin with the negative, "Thou shalt not". "Thou shalt *not* take revenge, thou shalt *not* retaliate." For only through the negative is the way opened to the positive. Do no wrong to an enemy, that is here the beginning, the only beginning. Out of this negative definiteness comes the positive definiteness, the suitable act, the task of the hour. This alone constitutes love of the enemy, the love which does not evaporate into empty feeling, and does not become hollow, unproductive, and therefore false, sentimentalism.

But with *this* act, too, our soul and our feelings ought to be joined; with justice to the enemy must be added that which is demanded by inward love. With the deed the beginning must be made; with it the feelings are awakened, and through it they develop. Yet here again Judaism starts with the negative, with a secure and definite prohibition. In Judaism, love means first and foremost: hate not. We are warned against all hateful, unloving feeling; for this is a plain order, and not simply an exaggerated emotion. "Rejoice not when thine enemy falls, and let not thine heart be glad when he is overthrown." We must not hate. For hatred is, to use a Talmudic word, "baseless"; the fact that others hate is no reason why we should do the same. It is senseless, and out of it there comes only destruction. So also it is said in the Talmud: "He who hates is to be classed with those who shed blood." Once this hatred ceases, the fight against evil becomes a yearning for the good. Aversion to that which is hostile to God can combine with love for men; it unites with love in the prayer that evil may vanish, but that the man who practised it may remain. Thus, in a constantly quoted passage from the Talmud, Beruria, wife of Rabbi Meir, interpreted a verse from Psalm 104: "May sin vanish from the earth, for then evildoers will be no more."

One thing is expressed in all this: the thought of the endlessness of the commandment. The commandment can never be fully real-

ized; it ever contains some fresh demand, it points constantly beyond itself. The task which we have to fulfil in regard to our neighbour is likewise endless. However much we may reproach him, that which we owe to him is yet more. His imperfection is always less than the obligation of our love. Our road to him is this road of duty. We must act towards our neighbour in the consciousness of the endlessness of duty, or, as the Talmud says: We must walk in the ways of God; even as God is merciful and gracious, so must we be merciful and gracious. Pity must set forth to us our attitude towards our fellow man. It must also be our standard of judgment. The best knowledge of human nature is given by leniency, the best truth about our neighbour is told by benevolence. As the Talmud expresses it: "If you wish to fulfil the commandment, 'judge your neighbour with righteousness' then judge every human being favourably!" Thus the justice we show to him, the *Zedakah*, produces love. In this way we are protected against self-righteousness, and become aware of our shortcomings. Then it will not happen that, as a Talmudic simile has it, "the accused judges the judge, when the latter says: 'Take the splinter out of thine eye', by saying in reply: 'Take the beam out of thine eye!'" God alone, the Holy One, may be jealous, He who is "merciful, gracious and long-suffering". The goal which He sets up for us men is return, atonement, peace among men.

In this connection, too, atonement is the reconciliation of finiteness with endlessness, the finiteness of limited and imperfect man with the endlessness of the commandment. This reconciliation occurs, and the endless absorbs the finite, when our enemy becomes our fellow man, when he returns, when he once more comes to himself, and to the path and origin of his life, and we can therefore get to him and he to us. Whoever is able to bring him to that point, proves the moral power of human love. "That man is a hero", says the Talmud, "who can make a friend of a foe." The yearning factor in the love of man, the prayer for our fellow men, are exemplified in him. "When a man's ways please the Lord, he makes even his enemies to be at peace with him." This sentence from the Book of Proverbs (xvi, 7) was accepted by the Rabbis of the Talmud. Rabbi Judah prayed: "O that the sinners

may become perfect, so that they cease to be evildoers!" Rabbi Eleazar prayed: "Grant, O Lord my God, and God of my fathers, that there should not arise hatred against us in any man's heart, and that there should not arise hatred against any man in our heart!" All hatred vanishes before this desire, and the path to peace is pointed out, — our path into the future. Here, too, peace is the vanquishing of loneliness — the loneliness of him who seeks his fellow man without finding him. Whoever discovers his fellow man, and clings to him, is, in spite of all, no longer alone among men, and, in spite of all, is at peace with them. Faith in our fellow man thus becomes faith in atonement; it is the promised future. Human love acquires the Messianic touch.

All Jewish religious literature accepts and preaches the famous Talmudic sentence: "Of those who are oppressed and do not oppress, who are reviled and who do not (in reply) revile, who act only from love (to God), and rejoice in their sufferings, the Scripture says, They who love Him are like the sun when it rises in its might." But the most touching chapter about love of the enemy is contained in the history of the religious community of Israel. Judaism can tell of unspeakable suffering, of agonising tortures of its children. But no wrong, no physical violence, have availed to stifle the human love in their hearts, a love not drowned in the stream of innocent blood. It is just from the very worst times that love of man speaks to us most distinctly and most from the heart. We possess popular books from the time of the worst persecutions, books on ethics, the authors of which must have been convinced when they wrote them that nobody but their co-religionists would ever read them. The most intimate voices speak to us from these books. They all join in the one refrain: Love thy neighbour, and be merciful even to thine enemy. Nathan the Wise, whose wife and seven sons had been all murdered on the same day, and whose heart even then did not grow hard, does not live merely in the dreamland of poetry. He has a real existence in the history of the Jewish communities. The crusaders killed the wife and child of Eleazar ben Jehuda of Worms, and he himself remained wounded almost to death upon the ground. When, in his old age, he recorded the experiences of his life, so that he might bequeath them to succeeding generations, not a single word

of hatred against his enemies was wrung from him. He too acknowledged but the one truth: it is better to suffer wrong than to do wrong. It is necessary to have read these medieval writings, which have scarcely anything to compare with them either in their own or much later times, in order to appreciate Jewish teaching in the full power of its love and its humanity, in all its tenderness of moral feeling. They helped not a little to make the story of Judaism's sufferings a book of nobility.

In the love of enemy, purity and sincerity of feeling are most convincingly shown. It is the great test of genuineness, upon which everything in love must depend. Much sooner than justice with its definite actions, the dangers of which are harshness and a cold sense of duty, can love become insincere. Side by side with empty enthusiasm, which is the untruthfulness of that which is hollow, hypocrisy, which is the untruthfulness of mere appearance, soon gains a hold upon love, so that love loses itself in hypocrisy. Once love is distorted it becomes soul-less. Since it is in love that the soul should reveal itself, it follows that in love sincerity is all important. Hence particular emphasis must be laid here upon a demand for truthfulness and for purity of feeling. Meticulous judgment, reverence for the small things, give shape to this commandment in Judaism, and are significant in its development, for even the least false emotional utterance is forbidden. He who proclaims kindness without feeling it, or even offers superficial amiability, knowing perfectly well that it will not be accepted, has, according to Talmudic law, "stolen the opinion of men"; he is to be considered as being "more than anyone" a thief. Similarly it is described as "an unfair advantage" when somebody arouses hopes without having the intention of fulfilling them. The contradiction between feeling and word is held not only as an untruth, but also as a violation of the strict probity to which our neighbour is entitled from us. In this extension of the idea of "hurt" we see the whole severity of the moral standard. Something else, moreover, comes here to light, namely, that truthfulness, too, has its social quality. It comes within the conception of obligation. God demands it, and our soul demands it, but our fellowman too has the right to demand it; it is the obligation which we owe to him.

Again, the tenderness of the commandment for true and unselfish love is shown in a care for animals. Here kindness is most completely disinterested, and here it is necessarily devoid of all hypocrisy and all calculated ostentation, devoid of hope of a grateful reward. With the animal over which man rules, pity is manifested for the sake of pity. The animal too is placed by the Bible under the protection of the law; it is made a part of human society, a feature unparalleled in the world of civilization. We are to assist even the animal in its need, and the Sabbath, established for the sake of the weak and the burdened, orders rest from toil for animals as well as for men. The conception of the community of labour includes the animal. Here, again, justice, with its definite task, comes first, and to it is added the demand for love; with emphasis and touching delicacy love is enjoined even to the animal. We are to practise love for the animal as though it were an obligation to God; that very same Divine goodness which sustains men causes the fruits of the soil to grow for the animal's sake too. Where the creative work of God is spoken of, the animal is often named and thought of. "He gives to the beast its food, and to the young ravens when they cry." "He causes the grass to grow for the cattle, and herbs for the service of man, that he may bring forth food out of the earth." "O Lord, thou preservest man and beast." Religion taught men to remember the animal; the love it enjoined was even more than pity. "*Thy beast*", as it says in the Bible, is not a mere indication of possession: it has a personal touch; it ranks with the expressions: "*thy poor, thy servant, thy stranger*". To neglect the animal, to drive it away, constitutes, according to a Talmudic legend, a sin which God punishes. A feature in the picture of the righteous or pious man, as described by Judaism, is that he "regards the life of his beast".

The truthfulness which is neither show nor hypocrisy is not, however, the only kind of truthfulness comprised in the commandment of neighbourly love. The truthfulness implied in this commandment has also its definite and positive content. Love for our neighbour, love for his soul, demands that we present to him the truth. When he goes astray, we are to lead him back to the right path, and when he is about to sin, we are to restrain

him, instruct and admonish him. Benevolence, pity and forgiveness do not suffice. "Thou shalt rebuke thy neighbour." "Love men, and bring them to the Torah." Just as it is a general commandment of truth that we must not merely cherish it within ourselves, but that we must openly bear witness to it, so, in particular, must we stand up for it against our neighbour, for the sake of our neighbour, as often as he deviates from the path of right. We must possess the moral courage of love: without it, we cannot do to the soul of another the good which we owe him. Faith in our fellow man leads on to reconciliation; but to it belong not only benevolence, but quite as much that truthfulness which points out to man the absolute and inviolable moral command. There can be no reconciliation which does not ask for an account before the just God who commands; it is before Him that we must bid our neighbour present himself. It is a duty to pardon the sinner; but it is no less our obligation to manifest the courage of truth, the courage of love, to condemn sin in the hearing, and by appealing to the conscience, of him who commits it; to repudiate sin, and thus to warn the sinner, and lead him back to the commandment. This, too, is a confession in the name of truth, the witnessing of it, and it may entail the martyrdom which love of our fellow man, love for his soul, demand. But it is, indeed, that very love which evokes and demands the rebuke, and supplies for rebuke its right measure. For it is only because of neighbourly love that we may admonish, rebuke and blame, and not out of egoism or self-righteousness. We must do it "for the sake of God", out of that reverence for the commandment which arises from true love, that true love which remains ever conscious of the greatness of its obligation. That is why the Talmud adds to our commandment a warning against putting anybody to shame. "He who puts his neighbour to shame, or sends the blood from his cheeks, he too has shed blood." The rebuke must proceed solely from a veritable need and from the command to do good to our neighbour.

The command to love thus becomes part of the duty of spiritual ministration; there is manifest in it our responsibility for the soul of our fellow man. "Thou shalt surely rebuke thy neighbour, and not bear sin because of him". If a person sins, and then, in the

words of the prophet Ezekiel, if "thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand". Or, as it is expressed in the Talmud: "It is said in the Bible: 'They shall stumble one upon another' — that is to say: they shall stumble, one by the guilt of another, through the guilt of them who might have averted it by their warning of one another, and did not; for they all are sureties, one for the other." The idea of sin acquires therewith its social touch; I and the other individual become morally one by the fact that his sin becomes mine, and that I have a share in his guilt. The social command, the command to care for our fellow man so that he may live with us, becomes the command that we walk the path of life with him, that we give him the opportunity of repentance, of *Teshubah*. Just as freedom, to Judaism, is a task which man has to solve in his own life, by creating his own life, so does it also become a task which he has to fulfil for the life of his fellow man, becoming also creator in regard to the life of his fellow man. A creator, and therefore a redeemer; he is ordered to liberate his fellow, to free him from the sin which fetters him. Thus the social command enters also into the idea of freedom.

The idea of the community, of human society, thus attains its full meaning. We all live together in society. One of the purposes of that living together is to guard one another from evil, and to guide one another to good. We are to form a union of *Teshubah*, of "return", a community of atonement. For that purpose, too, we belong to one another. In the eyes of God all communal life has a right to exist only if it seeks the realization of the good. So long as there live within it men devoted to the good, it retains this right; there may even be sinners within it, yet so long as there are righteous men beside the wicked to admonish and to guide, a future is preserved for the community before God, a way, a possibility of life. We learn it even from the Bible narrative: for the sake of ten righteous men Sodom was not to perish. A Talmudic sentence says still more clearly: "God declares: Good and bad are among them; let them then be joined together in a single bundle, that the one may atone for the other. And if it happens thus, my name is glorified through



them. Hence the prophet Amos said of God: For the Lord the God of Hosts is he that buildeth his stories in heaven, and hath founded his band upon earth; for this means: He is glorified in heaven when men form a band upon earth." The commandment of neighbourly love also becomes the commandment of the "sanctification of God's name", the Kiddush ha-Shem. Man is to sanctify God's name by his dealings with his fellow man.

Human society is regarded by Judaism as a moral unity. All members of human society are supposed to participate morally in every phase of life, whether it be a demand or an obligation. Any guilt incurred by the individual rests on the whole community, which is answerable for all the souls that comprise it. It is responsible before God, not only if somebody in the community dies of starvation or cold, but no less, if in its midst a soul becomes frozen, or a conscience perishes. The purpose of the community is the creation of the moral existence of human beings within it, all by means of all, each by the other. The Jewish idea of education is that it is, metaphorically speaking, a "building up", a realization. He who has taught the Torah to his neighbour's son, has, as it were, created him; he gives him life, new life. This is what the human community should be: a mutuality in bringing life to its realization, a relation between human beings, educating them so that the eternal may enter into their finiteness, and the kingdom of God into the mortal sphere. There can only be a community where justice and love find fulfilment. Therefore it is something never finished, something that is constantly growing, constantly asserting itself, always both a way and a commandment, always a yearning, a yearning for peace. A Psalm speaks of God being "favourable unto his land", when "mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace kiss each other".

Such, then, is faith in our fellow man; it is set before us as our task, as the demand of the duty which God imposes upon us. From out of the same depths, out of the same source, comes forth life, replete with mystery, and comes forth also the command, defined and distinct; the eternal God gives us the one as well as the other, each in the other. Man needs both. There is no life without the command, and each command stands for life; in bringing the good to realisation, man realises his life. In this

fulfilment of life our fellowman has his place. For it is only in the world that we are able to fulfil the good, and our world is the world in which our fellow man lives. Without this world, and without the command, which is valid for the world, there is in Judaism no religious faith. There is no religion possible for the solitary hermit, to whom the world does not exist, who retreats from it into the silence of devotion and rapture, or into meditation about the beyond with its pessimism concerning the world. The world belongs to God and His command. Judaism, too, knows of the contradiction between God and the world, the opposition between the endless and the limited, between the absolute and the conditioned; it knows also of the contrast between the Divine and the world, — our world and that of our fellow man, — the tragedy of him who exists in this world to find and to do. But that is the contrast which is implied in every task, which gives life to every task, from which it grows, — the perpetual conflict between that which is given and that which is to be fulfilled, between that which is and that which ought to be, that contrast through which all religiousness is shaped. It is that contrast which only the act of man, entering into the world, can overcome, so as to lead that which is finite in it upwards to the service of God, so that the Divine may reveal itself through man, and the earth may become filled with God's command. All such acts are acts towards our fellow man; the service of God has here its realm. The kingdom of God is built by work for our neighbour, and there can be no faith without faith in him.

The assurance of having been sent, that assurance of faith which derives from the Prophets, is here again the deciding factor; from out of it there comes strength to combat all restraining and resisting experiences. In this assurance the ideal retains its certainty, its command of justice and love, and does not become merely a melancholy dream, in which man imagines that he is serving God and raising himself up to Him, while he dreams in sentimental purity. He who understands and believes that he is "sent", that he has a mission in the world, does not "enjoy" God, as mysticism would experience God, enjoying its dreams, but he hears God calling to him, and he follows the path of the Eternal. Justice and love are words of mission, instructing us

what to do and how to do it, they point out to us the ways of God which are commanded us, so that we may "walk with God". God sends us upon those ways to our fellow man. Thus faith in God proclaims to us faith in our neighbour. Out of our fear of God there speaks to us also the reverence which we owe to him; we honour God when we respect him; in serving him we serve God; what we do for him we have offered to God. All our yearning includes him too, indeed our profoundest yearning is this social, this Messianic, yearning. All prayer includes him, and is on his behalf. He is our brother, God's child, linked to us by God, united with us in our ultimate origin and in the path upon which we are commanded to go. This faith too signifies action, — deeds of justice and love.

Attempts have often been made to rank the love of neighbour spoken of in the Torah and in the Prophets below that of Christianity. But in the Gospels the love of neighbour appears merely as a teaching of the Old Testament, as a quotation from it; this suffices to refute the suggestion. It requires no elaboration to show how, on the contrary, love is limited and confined in the New Testament by the fact that salvation and bliss are made dependent upon right faith, and therewith ultimately upon dogma and creed, so that they are denied to a section even of our very best fellow men. It is on man's conception of salvation that we find most clearly stamped his humanity, that heartfelt recognition of his fellow man, that well defined justice and love. The essential religious principle of neighbourly love finds expression in the distinction it draws between those to whom the way to God and to atonement is kept open, and those to whom it is closed, whether the way is that of man as such, or only that of the believer. Moreover, it must again be pointed out in this connection that in Christianity the determining factor is to experience the miracle of grace, and thus to be redeemed; thus the "I" of the individual man stands for itself alone, without his neighbour, at the centre of religion. There is lacking the Thou, which comprises all, the Thou which God, granting and commanding, speaks to every human being, and the Thou with which the human being is invoked by every other human being, the Thou of the fellow man, who is like him, and his equal before God.

The love of mankind in Buddhism is also sometimes contrasted with that of Judaism. Buddhism has its doctrine of love, which fervently preaches mercy and benevolence towards every living thing. But this fervour is, in reality, a fervour of sentimentality and melancholy. It differs from the teaching of Judaism by lacking reverence for our fellow man; it lacks the emphasis upon positive justice, and hence the clear demand, the resolute definiteness of the moral task. It lacks that mighty "thou shalt", the urgency and the demand, the social and the Messianic elements which constitute the peculiarity of Judaism. Buddhist morality has not gone beyond mere emotion. That is what gives it its negative, passive stamp, which is so characteristic of it; for warmth of feeling without a definite fulfilment of duty is, from the moral standpoint, nothing but inactivity or idleness; to help in the lot of our neighbour only with our feeling, means in effect to be indifferent. Buddhism has been termed the religion of indolence. That is a harsh judgment, but one thing for certain is true of it, that with all its idealist merits it is the religion of inactive feeling, of moral inertia. Moreover, for it too salvation means everything; the question of the "I" is the sole question of life.

The Greeks too, and especially the Stoic philosophers, are sometimes quoted, for the purpose of belittling the historical significance of Judaism. The names of these thinkers stand for something great in the history of ethics. Their humanity, the breadth of their outlook and the exaltedness of their ideas, have ever afresh taken hold of men, and inspired many a generation which has been affected by them. They were philosophers who became teachers of philosophy. Yet it was just *philosophy* that they proclaimed, and that accounts for the speciality of their thoughts, but also for their shortcomings and their weakness. They breathe the thin air of the school; they wear the pale colour of mere wisdom. Though they succeeded in attracting many most cultivated men, though they gained influence over the great Roman teachers of law e. g. Ulpian, Julius Paulus, Florentinus, and though later, too, outstanding men became their disciples, they were never able to exercise any sort of lasting influence upon the people, their life and morals. Nothing in their teachings

became a command in the strict sense of the word, or became, if one may be permitted to say so, "Torah". The actuality of life remains detached from those virtues which are lauded by these philosophers. They did not succeed in educating the people or society. Above all, they lacked moral passion and enthusiasm, the prophetic struggle against the present, the Messianic demand for the future. They are human, yet they do not possess a forward looking faith in the "days to come". Confronted with life and its wants, they have nothing to offer but resignation. They lack those words of command and promise: "I am the Lord thy God." Their ideas have gained a certain hold upon men, but have not become their *faith*.

The peculiarity of Judaism is faith in our fellow man with its unity of demand and promise, of action and assurance. From the source of religion arises our relation with our neighbour. This relation is not merely one of charity, but in it man shows his piety and his fear of God. Love of neighbour is the content of life, that "which is good and which the Lord demands of thee", and it is, therefore, not something incidental or even frequent, but *the* command of life. In Judaism love of neighbour means the decision that our neighbour is our fellow man who lives with us; the decision has to be taken again and again; it is the decision of him who hearkens unto the word of God. That is why love of neighbour was able to fashion all thought and feeling, to permeate the days of human existence. Even its adversaries and its enemies have always been constrained to concede that in Judaism love of neighbour remained neither a mere word nor a mere emotion, that the "prompta misericordia", the active and ready compassion, of which Tacitus speaks, has never disappeared or become narrow. It has become in Judaism a law of life; it is that justice or righteousness through which man proves his humanity.

It witnesses to his clear understanding of the distinctive quality of Judaism, that Maimonides represents "justice", "*Zedakah*", as the virtue of self-perfection. To live one's life to the full, to prove one's worth by action, to develop one's truest individuality, — that means: to be just, to tread the path which leads to one's fellow man. It is in this sense that the *Zaddik*, the righteous man, has been extolled by Judaism. It is through him that life

becomes real. In this sense the old Aramaic translation of the Bible, called the "Targum", rendered a verse in Proverbs (X. 25) by "the righteous man supports the world". Or, as Rabbi Yochanan expressed it: "If there be but one righteous man, the continuance of the world is guaranteed." It is he who creates human life. The fulness of this life is inexhaustible; the duties, in which it constantly renews itself, are never at an end, the goal of these tasks can never be achieved. The way to our fellow man is the way which lies through the endlessness of morality; it is a way of humility, for humility is the consciousness of the immeasurable, wherein man is placed; it is a way of reverence, for reverence is the realization of morality, which stands before man, exalted and endless; reverence is the will and the way to serve the endless command. Just as our life has its purity and its moral strength through our belief in ourselves, which springs from its source in the eternal God, so also in our faith in our fellow man it wins the world of its freedom. Such life constantly begets new life. The secret has its command, and the command its secret, its mystery.

### FAITH IN MANKIND

In the faith which regards man as the image of God, and the good as the greatest reality, — in this faith which is also a command, there is involved the conviction that the good will be realized, and that the future belongs to the good. That which God implanted in man, and therefore demands of him, must be able in the end to develop itself; it must be able to overcome all impediment and resistance, and all that which was not made by God, but by man. That which issues from the eternal foundation of all that is human possesses life which will endure. He who experiences the original and the creative element in man, that which is primary in life, that which was given and demanded by God, realizes at the same time that this element is permanent and abiding. Its creation guarantees its future. We cannot believe in its beginning and source, and yet doubt about its end; we cannot believe in the way, and yet know nothing of the goal. God's commandment is the commandment which includes the

day to come, "the day of the Lord", which decides everything; it contains that answer which will be the final answer. Were this not so, it would not be the commandment of God. The "end of the days" can only be the fulfilment of the good. An old Greek saying declares that to the mind of God the end is already realized at the beginning — "what is last in act is first in thought". In all that is Divine, in all which has full existence and reality, the completion belongs to the beginning, and the future is involved in the origin. To him who believes in the good and recognises it as Divine, as the shaping and governing element in man, it appears as reality, as that which will last and endure in the human race. Faith in the future is involved in faith in God, in the reverence of God. All ethical and religious volition is at bottom reverence and faith; it is therewith a conviction of that which is to come. He who possesses the commandment possesses the promise. The meaning of the future constitutes the meaning of life.

Men learned of this future, therefore, when they experienced within themselves the creative element and the commandment of God, the purity of the soul and its resolve. It is in this that the future finds its meaning, and history finds its significance, so that this future is not merely those last days of existence which are spoken about in myths, not merely that chance conclusion which is brought about by fate, not a mere happening, but it is a realization and a fulfilment; it is the goal to which the path leads, the day which is to come because come it shall, the issue of the promise of that which man creates. This idea could not have arisen from the mere feeling of absolute dependence; this pure feeling has its deep devotion, but it lacks future and history, just as it lacks reverence. The idea of the future is also an especially Jewish idea, a peculiar feature of Jewish religiousness. In this idea too is contained that tension which is peculiar to all Jewish piety. Here it is the tension, with all its tragedy, between the near and the far, between the nearness of the path which begins with every human life, and the farness of the goal which reaches beyond every human life, between the demand which is made upon each individual, and the perfection which points beyond the individual. It is the tension between deed and yearning, the

deed which cannot be without yearning, and the yearning which cannot be without deed, between that present which always desires to be a future, and that future which ought always to be a present — that tension out of which emerges unity and wholeness. Ever since the Prophets, this has been a vital experience in Judaism, namely, the consciousness of a mission; and bound up with this experience is the experience of *expectation*. It is nothing short of expectation; the word hope would be too weak an expression for it; for this expectation in Judaism is not a mere desire or an opinion, but it is a conviction, the faith of him who believes in his deed and in his path, for which he has been appointed by God. To be sent by God and to expect God, such is Jewish piety. The tension between these two and the unity which they constitute, that is the future as it is experienced in Judaism, the *Messianic element* which is its own special peculiarity.

In this Messianic quality the commandment attains to the fulfilment of its meaning. The commandment, the task, is infinite; a task which can be concluded is no task. This immeasurable command is set before man; he is called upon to walk along the path which it means. He is called upon to follow this path, and yet it is denied him; the limitations of his short earthly existence act as a barrier to him. He can attain the petty, everyday things in his life, and the tasks which he sets *himself*, but the great thing, the task which *God* sets him, reaches beyond his earthly existence. All the life of man is but a part of it; he is only able to look out into the promised land. But though he cannot enter it, the path of life, which is also his life, continues on earth, starting from him and leading back to him. His day is a short one, but the day of mankind is long. In mankind the way of the commandment extends itself, and also the way of existence, the way which leads beyond the day of each man's death. Mankind possesses human destiny with all its breadth; in mankind the good is to look for its complete realization. Mankind gazes upon its goal; its future is the truest human future. It will attain to that which is man's mission, and to that which he expects; the commandment, which ever anew is enjoined upon him, and in which every order produces some fresh order, can find its completion in mankind. In the faith in mankind faith in ourselves



reaches its culmination; the full force of the words of the Prophets, as the Talmud says, applies to mankind. There can be no commandment without conviction, and all conviction concerning the commandment is a conviction about the future. Each particular day acquires its whole meaning through the day which is to come.

Moreover, the conception of mankind, too, gains thereby a fuller content. Mankind stretches away into time, just as it stretches away over all the earth. It signifies not only the unity of nations, each one of which proceeds from that whole, and in the whole finds its meaning, but it signifies as well the unity of the days in which every single generation is part of a history, a step forward along the path at the end of which stands fulfilment. The unity of the nations and the unity of the ages: these two constitute together the world of man. One century follows another, and gives birth to another, and they all issue out of the great beginning, the creation, and lead to the great fulfilment, the future. Even this world, this mere succession of days, was created by God, and it too hears from God its "Thou shalt". Life is not something which is a mere happening, a mere chain of lives, something which is merely natural and actual, any more than it is a mere fate. It is not something which chances to be there, it has a meaning; it is a part of God's world, which God made as the world of man. Every generation has a place of its own among the generations, in the great process of history. "Generations come and generations go"; but there is something which abides "from generation to generation". It is the word of mission and of promise, commanding and at the same time consoling, urging and yet assuaging: this saying: From generation to generation, this Abiding. The limited existence of the individual, — of the individual man, and of the individual nation, — ceases to be merely limited; it is limited, and yet unlimited, since, through its own contribution, it leads on to the days to come. Through the path each step forward attains its meaning; the infinite of mankind enters the finite of the individual man. Each individual existence has its significance with which it reaches beyond itself into the spaciousness of all the ages; it stands within something greater, in the whole wherein the commandment has its existence. As it learns about itself, it learns

also of something within it which is greater than itself. Just as it learns about its place in the infinite, in the invisible, and therewith becomes humble, so it learns now about the infinite of its own place, about the invisible to which it reaches out, and so it gains that feeling for that highest which is in man, and belongs to him. It gains reverence for itself, Messianic reverence.

It is here that history has its soul; here too its unity, constituted by God's revelation of Himself to mankind, and mankind's obligation to reveal itself to God, by God's gift to mankind of its world, and mankind's obligation to prepare the world for God. Here again is the unity of the paradox, the unity of experience and life, of being created and creating, of humility and reverence. History, too, has its secret which belongs to God, and its plainness which belongs to man: "to fulfil all the words of this Law". The Messianic character of Judaism, its monotheistic character, which was discovered in its history, becomes manifest also in this unity; in this unity the spirit lifted itself above that lack of humility, which knows only of the every-day life of the I, and above that lack of reverence which knows only of the I of every-day life; it became able to see the hidden and to hear the commandment. Judaism taught men above all things to listen to this commandment; in face of all historical misdeeds, which their purpose and their success attempt to justify and to designate as history, Judaism has always had to preach the categorical absolute of the ethical demand. It has had to pass judgment upon that most fatal, double morality, which asserts a different right and wrong for individuals and for nations, upon that dualism of the commandment which sets up different standards for ethics and for politics, in order to provide the state with a good conscience should its justice lag behind the justice which is demanded of the individuals within its borders, — upon that dualism to which all right and wrong become ultimately mere fiction, and all morality nothing but the glorification of a past and the renown of power.

It is only through the Messianic idea that ethics become the ethics of history, and the commandment a commandment for the nations, so that national morality becomes something better than a morality of escape from, and evasion of, the commandment, or even a morality which permits the nation to avoid morality.

If, when nations make politics their law, and when every object of their power is to permit to them every means of power, the religions condone such a course, or at any rate offer the no less eloquent silence of toleration, such condoning and such silence always proceed from those religions which are devoid of the Messianic idea, which either have never possessed it or no longer possess it, in which compromise has replaced the categorical imperative, and opened the door to a twofold, indeed to a manifold, morality. Only through the Messianic idea can the power of ethical volition and sincerity, the power of clinging fast to the right and of reasoning things out to their logical end, enter the great life of history. It is only from the Messianic idea that history gets its urging and driving moral force, its great yearning and its trust, the great hunger for justice, which is the great conviction of justice — the expectation, which not only expects and waits, but knows that it has been sent, the mission, which is able not only to set about its task, but also to expect, and wait for, its fulfilment.

The goal of history is, therefore, the fulfilment of the good. Even upon earth the good, in its realization, is lifted above the course of time, above change and decay, so that it should achieve its ultimate end here too on earth. For the individual, the consummation lies in the world beyond, and the outline of the other world, rising above the dim shore of death, gathers him up; for mankind the consummation is in this world, and the path of history is the path thereto. Thus the beyond enters this world, and eternity, the world to come, descends upon the earth in order to reveal the future and to become the future — the eternal goal in this world, the beyond upon earth. That which is to come assumed early in the thought and language of Judaism a two-fold meaning: the future in the world beyond and the future of this world. The days to come: they are the world which will be upon earth, the days through which the good manifests its immortality in this world. The consummation of the good has both its transcendence and its immanence; it extends into the world of eternity and into the world of history, up to the heavens, so to speak, and to the paths below upon earth. It is that which will be revealed only in the world to come, and it is also that which

will be brought to us here. It is another peculiarity of Judaism that this polarity is experienced, and that both sides of it are felt, with the same intensity, almost as though they were a unity. That is again the reason why the secret carries also the commandment in itself, and the commandment is rooted in the secret, that is why the human dwells in the Divine, and the Divine demands the human; it is the unity of the given and the commanded. The "day which is wholly good" is yonder in the hidden, revealing itself only in the life of eternity; but it exists also in the earthly task; in the midst of finiteness its fulfilment waits for mankind, and in mankind it waits for every man. The life of perfection asks the decision of man. The kingdom of the future belongs to God and man, granted by God and demanded of man.

Once more there emerges here the idea which embraces everything in Judaism, the idea of atonement. The expectation of the future sees atonement and its peacefulness, it sees before it the day of freedom. Future and atonement mean in essence the same: the certainty of the new and the nearness of the far. In all atonement there is the path of the future; for in all return there is a moving forward. Atonement is a return to the beginning, and all beginning is the beginning of the path to the goal; every renewal is an advance. In history the decision which resolves on a new beginning has its endlessness, and the choice its boundlessness. Mankind has a history, and this means: mankind has the capacity of continual self-renewal, of continual rebirth, of beginning ever again, of breaking down obstacles, of annihilating destruction, and of turning ever again to atonement. For the right path of history stands, despite all by-paths of error; in spite of all sins, the good remains mankind's task. As an old saying has it: "A sin may extinguish a commandment, but it cannot extinguish the Torah" — the "light" remains, in the radiance of which mankind may find its future. The day of atonement is, as another saying of the Talmud calls it, "the day which never ends". When history attains to this day of the return, a new historical epoch begins. It is then that history has a fresh beginning, a new covenant with God; in history life proves itself and finds its realization, and a victory is won over transitoriness. Mankind is always able to re-create itself. Like all atonement, its future is

the atonement of finiteness and infiniteness, of human existence and commandment, of the gift and the goal, of that which is and that which is to be. The day to come is the revelation of the eternal in the human, the possession of peace upon earth, the reconciliation, so to speak, of immanence and transcendence. Here too goal and origin become as one. The goal is the *Teshubah*, the return to the origin, that return to the pure, to the creative, to ourselves, that life in the kingdom of God which man is to create. The glimpse into the purity and freedom which is in man permits, therefore, also of the glimpse into this future. The good which is in us permits us to see that which is to come, the future of mankind.

There is thus in Judaism a striking inter-connection between beginning and destination, between creation and goal, an inter-connection which is not brought about by power, by considerations of politics or state, but by what is purely human. There is a life, comprising all that is human, in which all generations have their past, the one past, and their future, the one future. Any particular incident in history is not a mere isolated incident, or a mere link in the chain of fate; its meaning and its value lie in the whole; the whole belongs to it, and it belongs to the whole. Thus is overcome the mythological conception of fate, which knows only birth and not origin; dependence, but no path; destined doom, but no attainable goal. Thus also is loneliness in history overcome, the loneliness of the generation which sees itself surrounded by separating factors, by the opposition between parent and child, by the conflict between those who go and those who come, between those who have and those who seek, between those who rest and those who struggle, the loneliness of the generation which dies and goes with itself to the grave. Each generation fits into the series of generations, into the great significance of history. The fragment becomes a part, the disconnectedness of episodes becomes a covenant of epochs, which tells of the covenant with God. The expression "from generation to generation", that appeasing and commanding expression, thus attains its full content. History affords an answer to the depressing problem of individual existence, to that which has not been fulfilled in the years which were allotted to any one generation. Above all the

barriers which separate epoch from epoch stands unity, and above the generations stands life. The unfulfilled gazes upon fulfilment, the limited day receives the justification granted by that which is to come; it is, as it were, consoled. The word *consolation* becomes the word of the future.

United in this consolation are promise and demand, confidence and commandment; the promise is directed towards freedom. In Judaism faith in that which is to come cannot exist without the will towards bringing it about, or without the resolve to do one's duty. The future presents itself as the certainty which is guaranteed by the task, and the task presents itself as the certainty which has its pledge in the future. The task is the task of the future, and the future is the future of the task. Goal and path, that which is afar off and announced, and that which is near and demanded, reveal one another, and justify each other. Justice and love in Judaism are also ultimately one; the granting God is the commanding God. Jewish optimism is, therefore, not the proclamation of a salvation, which by divine grace has already been vouchsafed to mankind, but it is the announcement of the life which has been given to mankind, and which mankind is to create: a life given to mankind in order that mankind *should* create it. The promised salvation of the world is the commandment which is proclaimed to the nations, the direction which is given to their history. Thus it is that this optimism has also its pessimistic element; a protest is contained in it; through its belief in the future it shows a contempt for the day, and pours mockery upon the hour. There is a Messianic contempt for the world, a Messianic irony, which includes a consolation that underlies the mockery, — Jewish irony, Jewish mockery contain this Messianic element — and only those who possess the strength of this pessimism, this mockery, this irony, this protest, are the really great optimists, the great believers, who hold fast to the future, and bring the world a step further forward on the path to it, — the comforters among the people, the chosen among humanity.

Mankind is thus destined to realize more and more the good within itself. That is the true content of its life; to fulfil it is the aim of its existence, the exaltedness and holiness which enters

into its life. The history along which this life flows has, perhaps, no laws of its own, but it has its commandments. Or, to express it differently: the commandments which are imposed upon it are the laws which govern it. With the idea of the good is connected the conception of that which mankind has to verify — the conception of ethical development — not always as a fact, but always as a commandment from generation to generation — the ethical conception of universal or world-history. This conception, too, was formulated by the Prophets. They recognized the unity of the human race, and created the idea of humanity. By this means they discovered the problem of universal history; they grasped clearly the idea of that which is lasting and revivifying in mankind, the idea of the path which leads the nations to their goal. The days of upheaval in which they lived had aroused in them the question of why and wherefore — in peaceful times existence and current morality seem to be self-evident, whilst in agitated times they become problematic; the crumbling which was going on around them caused them to ask: What is abiding? Where others heard the dull tone of fate working itself out, they experienced the revelation of the eternal: history to them is not a fate, but a revelation, a creation. They do not, therefore, speak of that which happens, in order to describe it, but they speak of that which they know, in order to proclaim it. Just as, of their own initiative, they realized the world of nature, so they also realized the world of history. Their purpose was not to write the chronicles of the nations, but to measure all movement and action by the path of mankind, the path which they experienced through their conscience, and which they saw through their faith. Each day, as it occurred, indicated something to them; it showed them not merely what it was, and what happened in it, but above all what it meant, and what it manifested. Their religion endowed their vision of history with horizon and perspective.

The two ideas of mankind and of world-history are closely connected. For if there is but one mankind, if the unity is fundamental and original, then the only life which can be called historical is that in which this unity is realized, that which is *in* mankind and *for* mankind; that life alone occupies a place in history. Only *that* can really develop a people which is able to form an integral

part of the life of mankind. It is its contribution to the history of the world which is characteristic and valuable in the history of a people. Without a history of mankind there can be no mankind. But the unity of the human race rests only upon that which is divine in it. It is common to all men, no matter to what nation or race they belong, that they are the image of God, that they were created by Him in order themselves to create. They are separated only by that which is merely human, and it is the good and the divine which unites them all. The true, the real, and the significant existence of mankind is, therefore, the experience of this one thing, namely, of that which is given and which ought to be, of that which unites all, of that in which all can find themselves. The true history of the world is the history of the good; it has found realization when it is universally acknowledged. The unity of the human race becomes an ethical demand, the task of the lives of all the nations upon earth. By the nations themselves must this unity be created.

Though we may hold fast to the certainty of path and goal, we finite beings are unable to follow the course of evolution in all its turnings and changes. That is the prerogative of divine wisdom, "calling the generations from the beginning". It is not that which is limited and springs from the life of man, but the Divine, which creates history. The forces which derive from God are the vital forces in history; they are, indeed, its determining realities. The spirit of God reveals itself in history, and only that which brings that spirit and its commandment to realization is of lasting existence, and not merely of longer or shorter duration. It is, therefore, not the plans and intentions of men which create the Abiding. All the thoughts and strivings and strugglings of the nations are in vain, if they are against God. "The Lord bringeth the counsel of the nations to nought: he maketh the thoughts of the peoples to be of none effect." Of what avail are all the buildings of might which are erected by the nations? God causes them to tumble down. What mean all the powers of the world? God permits them to appear and to vanish; they are only there to be overcome. What are all the "princes and judges of the earth"? "Yea, scarcely have they been planted; scarcely have they been sown; scarcely hath their stock taken root in the earth, when he bloweth upon



them, and they wither, and the whirlwind taketh them away as stubble." To him who believes *that*, all the arrogance with which the powers of the earth boast themselves, all their building and piling up, are laughable and ridiculous, worth pity and no more. With the irony of them who know, the Prophets look down upon the hustle and bustle of a world convinced of its own importance. "The peoples labour for vanity, and the nations for the fire, and they shall be weary." In their sayings about God that irony which conquers doubt ascends to the Eternal. "He that sitteth in the heavens doth laugh: the Lord hath them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure." Such is the end of all human striving.

Thus do the Prophets experience it again and again in the history of the world: mere earthly power is set up only to break down at the last: on the first day of its existence the rift already opens in anticipation of the day of its downfall. The striving after mere power is in the end nothing but self-destruction. Mere power is senselessness; it is unethical, unreal, opposed to God; it is, to express the prophetic thought in the language of Kant, that evil "which possesses by its very nature the quality of attacking and destroying itself". History is the ruin heap of power, and to work for its triumph is to work for ruin. Against the strivings of power are directed the full mockery, but also the full pathos, of the Prophets, their "woe" in which imploring and threatening are as one: "Woe to him that increaseth that which is not his! for how long?" "Woe to him that getteth an evil gain for his house, that he may set his nest on high, that he may be delivered from the hand of evil!" "Woe to him that buildeth a town with blood, and establisheth a city by iniquity!" Belief in earthly power is to them very unbelief, and the fight against it is the fight of the knowledge of God against paganism; each erection of power is to them as an idol. In opposition to it they set up the conception of eternal right. All power is power for the day, and the labour for it is labour for vanity, but the right is right for ever, the path to the future. Not might, therefore, is right — for might is wrong — but right is might, the true might which comes from God. A Talmudic sentence interprets a psalm verse, "God's might it is that he loves justice", (literally "the King's might", the King being

taken as God), by adding: "In human striving might is a contradiction of right; he who possesses power disregards right. In God alone might is right. Therefore the psalm proceeds: Thou, O God, dost establish equity, thou executest judgment and righteousness in Jacob". Only that might which is the Right can endure.

However much men may think to direct its course, history is, therefore, determined in its results by God. It is a drama of Divine thoughts, of Divine commandments; it is the history of the covenant of God with mankind. Only that which realizes this covenant and fulfils the thoughts of God and His commandments may be regarded as results and realities. All nations are in the service of this history. Good and evil, life and death, were set before them by God, and to them too is directed the word: "Thou shalt choose." None is relieved of the choice or exempt from it, — that is the judgment of history — the choice to walk in the path of life in order to live on, or to walk in the path of evil, in order to add to the heap of the ruins of the centuries. Some higher power, the power of righteousness, commands the nations, determines history, determines what history is. Such is the meaning of the words which Jeremiah heard: "I have set thee this day over the nations to pluck up, and to break down; to destroy and to overthrow; to build and to plant." The nations can never escape that decision; however self-assured they may be, however much they may brag about their actions, they are yet simply tools of God. They may decide in favour of the good, they may choose the will of God, becoming thus therewith tools of God, and possessing the highest nobility of human nature. They all belong to Him, and may all become His people, chosen by Him for salvation. "Have not I brought up Israel out of the land of Egypt, and the Philistines from Caphtor, and the Syrians from Kir?" "For that the Lord of hosts hath blessed them, saying, Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance." This is also a consolation for the small and the weak; they are not to fear or to despair. The force of wickedness, far reaching as its rule may be, will be unable to crush them. For when the day comes, then "the stone will be cut out of the mountain, without hands", to destroy towering presumption. "The Lord shall judge the ends of the earth."

This was taught, not by a scientific knowledge of the past, and not by historic insight. It is the conviction of the reality of the good, that prophetic sense of reality, which here finds expression, the idea of the fulfilment of earthly existence; it is the faith which shows the way of all happenings. It was the realization that, just like the life of the individual, so also that of mankind has its meaning and task, which created the idea of world-history. Morality reaches to the end of the world in its validity, and until the end of time; *one* justice rules upon earth, setting everywhere and for everything the same measure of meaning; the realization of this created faith in the One and commanding God, as also the conviction that in all happenings upon earth a higher order and exalted interconnection are manifest. It was through the unity of the ethical, and the unity of righteousness, that the unity of history was realized. It was quite specially through monotheism, the knowledge of the One and just God, that the idea of world-history was born. The latter necessarily follows from the former: there can be no monotheism without world-history. Thus did world-history become a problem of religion.

The prophets did not, therefore, learn to understand God through the history of the world any more than they gained their knowledge of Him by contemplating nature. The reverse is the case. The conception of the world which they had acquired became clear to them only through their understanding of the Divine Being. They gain an insight into the divine order of the world and into the law of justice which manifests itself in everything. The great figures of world-history appear to them as the champions of God, the messengers of the Lord, worldly prophets so to speak, whom God has brought into existence. The great events and revolutions upon earth are to them like messages sent by God to the nations. Everything which happens on earth is done, in their eyes, in the service of a holy will, and its supreme end is the glory of God, the "sanctification of the divine name".

This religious historical sense was awakened by life quite early in Israel. The existence of Israel as a nation begins with the deliverance from Egypt. It was a creative, historical event, which was also a religious event, and fostered that truly religious and truly historical feeling, the feeling of liberation and redemption;

the people's liberator was thus its first and greatest prophet. So the first of Israel's experiences was God's sway over history, and the beginning of Israel's faith and the opening words of the Law refer to it: "I am the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage." This appreciation of the inner meaning of history became deepened in the course of the centuries during which Israel had to fight for the preservation of its peculiar character. So far as its political history is concerned, which was, moreover, frequently condemned by the Prophets, Israel was never able to achieve anything of importance; it stood among the powers of this world, where worth is judged by strength of numbers and possession, poor and insignificant. It was able to believe in itself only if there was a history where other values counted, or where the criterion was that other truth: "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." Its only resistance to the ruling powers lay in the appeal to the days to come, in the certainty that the future belongs to the good, that God will deliver every nation from bondage, that the last day like the first will be a day of freedom and of redemption. The experience of the beginning spoke ever of this ending, spoke of that "new song" which Israel shall sing together with the whole world. Moreover, those were times of ferment when men saw empires come and go and disappear from the face of the earth as if they had never been. It was likely enough that religious thought should have been impressed by the fact that the guarantee of existence does not lie in an abundance of earthly power, but that something else, something more real, alone gave the promise of true and abiding permanence.

The basic idea of the Prophets is that there is but one true foundation of existence: righteousness and morality. A people cannot subsist without a certain measure of virtue. As soon as a nation ceases to satisfy that foremost of all demands, it must perish. Even the mightiest power must disappear if it attempts to rest upon sin and wickedness. The Prophets do not refrain from pronouncing a verdict even against Israel when it becomes false to duty. All the nations are placed before the just God; their freedom stands before Him, and He passes judgment. "With righteousness does he judge the world, and the peoples with

in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin will I remember no more." Righteousness and justice will then have become a reality upon earth. All that is savage and brutal will vanish, and all wickedness which consumes the best power of the nations, and causes them to toil for empty nothingness, will disappear. Blind strife and bloody warfare will no longer devastate lands, nor will discord tear mankind asunder. "And they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." In this poetry of peace every living thing is transfigured and unified, in the eyes of the Prophet, into a picture of harmony. "And the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." To avoid wrong and to seek good means to know God; with this conviction the preaching of the prophets began with admonition about the present, and with the same conviction it now concludes in hope for the future.

In that period of history when it was the leader who guided events, when the king, to a much greater extent than later on, represented the destiny of his people, all hope in the future had to be connected with a definite ruling personality. This applies particularly to prophetic thought, to which all abstract presentation remained quite foreign, and, instead, the form of some real human being, with his disposition and action, appeared before the mind. Some of the prophets speak less of the times to come than of *the man to come*. To them the ideal of the future assumes the appearance of the ideal personality. It is a man by the grace

of God who succeeds in bringing to pass the decisive days, and in founding the kingdom of fulfilment, a man, as their ethical hope conceives him, who does not aspire to power in order to rule by power, but who is full of humility and the fear of God, and conquers the minds of men by virtue of these qualities. Their expectations are entirely concrete and free of all vagueness; in order to describe the ideal, they think of the individual men they actually know. For it is thus that their emotions and hopes find most personal expression, that their love for that which is to come, their concern for that which is to grow up, are felt most vividly; it is thus too that their thoughts appeal to the mind of humanity, for to them Israel's destiny, both external and internal, is the destiny of religion, and therefore the destiny of mankind. To them the ideal man of the future can only assume the form of the most pious man among their own people, — the form of him who knows the One God, the God of Israel, and who truly stands, according to the will of God, as a shepherd before his flock. The danger in every ideal is that it becomes too broad and general, that it evaporates in the vagueness of mere yearning, thus ceasing to stand, demanding and urging, before man; that its gaze is fixed solely upon the future, and not upon man's duty here and now, that it depicts only what is to be, and does not also demand what *ought* to be. In Judaism this danger is avoided by reason of the fact that the Messianic hope is placed within the definite framework of the Israelite people and its history. The plain picture of the Israelite land and people makes the commandment also plain: by Israel itself the commandment demands that the decision is primarily to be made. The same idea is expressed in the parting words of Moses: "For this commandment, which I command thee this day, is not too hard for thee, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, and make us to hear it, that we may do it? Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, and make us to hear it, that we may do it? But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it." The human has its origin in the personal, and every path into the Far must have its beginning in the Near.

Upon this definiteness of their teaching rests the personal force of the words which the prophets proclaimed. For them the shepherd in Israel has a historical, an established and clearly outlined form; he is the son of the humble champion of God, from whose history there radiate out into the present the old glamour and the old splendour, and all the brilliant and great memories of people and religion: he is a descendant of David, a king according to the will of God, an annointed one, a Messiah. The son of David is the man to come, he embodies the ideal of the future in a personality of flesh and blood; he can, as a living person, show to men what ought to be and will be. He is the Messiah in the ideal meaning of the word. The prophet Isaiah visualized him thus: "And there shall come forth a shoot out of the stock of Jesse, and a branch out of his roots shall bear fruit; and the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; and his delight shall be in the fear of the Lord: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears; but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins."

Later on the commanding element became more emphasized in this hope, and every commandment applies to all. It is now no longer the belief in one man who will renew the world, which seeks expression, but a belief in the new life which is to arise upon earth. Moreover, it is inconsistent with the genius of Judaism that one man should be lifted above humanity so as to mean everything to it, to give everything to it, and to be to it as its destiny. The conception of the one man retreats more and more behind the conception of the one time; the Messiah gives way to the "days of the Messiah". Side by side with it another term appears, yet more definite, that of the "*kingdom of God*". The term was fashioned by the belief in the One God. It designated the whole of existence, created by man in serving his God; it is the realm of God which man prepares upon earth. It was thus able to

become the term for the goal, for the entire task and promise which are directed to Israel and to mankind, as well as for everything which is to be realized in the unending future. It contains no mere secret of the future, it is not an announcement of something which will ultimately descend to earth from some other world, but, arising, as it does, out of the very depths of the significance of life, it is the demand and certainty of that which every person and every period must begin, in order that life may at last be fulfilled. The kingdom of God is the world of man as it should be before God, just as the ways of God are also the ways in which man ought to walk — an existence which “breathes in the fear of God”, lifted above lowliness and dust, a life of devoutness and commandment, lived in the world, and yet different from it, within the world, but not of the world. In Judaism the kingdom of God is not a kingdom above the world, or opposed to it, or even side by side with it. It is rather the answer to the world, the answer which is given by the goal, the reconciliation of its finiteness with its infiniteness. It is not that sort of future which is nothing but future, the future of miracle for which man can only wait, but it is the future of the commandment which has always its present, which ever demands a beginning and a decision from man — the future of a life which is always beginning anew. In the conception of this future lies the knowledge that man is a creative being, the contradiction of the idea that he has to remain bound and confined in the doom of guilt, which only a miracle can break. The kingdom of God is to Judaism something which man, as the Rabbis say, “takes upon himself”; he chooses it. It is the kingdom of piety into which man enters through the moral service of God, through voluntary obedience in the fear of God; for the divine will is not something foreign to him, or something which moves alongside of his life, but rather that which becomes the fulfilment of his days. He who knows and acknowledges God through never ceasing good deeds, he is on the road to the kingdom of God.

If the kingdom of God thus represents the goal of the future, the whole life of man, it also comes to mean the whole, as standing for the community which comprises all. The social and the Messianic ideal belong to one another; the future regarded as a



whole is that which unifies all men, and the task of life becomes the ideal of this unifying force. The kingdom of God will be the kingdom in which all human beings find themselves united together. The idea of the kingdom as also that of the state is thus moralized; the conception of a ruling power is bereft of its materialism, freed of any notion, clinging to it before, of mere power, mere possession, freed of all compulsion and oppression. The kingdom of God is the kingdom which rests not upon force, but upon the commandment of God, the kingdom in which freedom rules and freedom obeys, because God rules and the fear of God serves. The thought underlying the Messianic conception is that the human soul must not allow itself to be subjugated to anyone but God, the One; the kingdom of God is the one kingdom, the kingdom of the One ruling power. He who would stand merely within the domain of earthly power has rejected the kingdom of God. We may catch a trace of this conception even in the old Bible story about the days when the people of Israel wanted to be "like all other nations". "And the Lord said unto Samuel . . . they have rejected me, that I should not be king over them." As it is the opposite of mere power, of servile commanding and obeying, so the idea of the kingdom of God is the antithesis of anarchy, which repudiates all command, the antithesis to that freedom without freedom which knows only negation. Only he who *serves* God lives in the kingdom of God; there is no freedom without reverence and fear of God. Hence united with the yearning for the kingdom of God is the commandment concerning the sanctification of God's name. In that old prayer, which, such as few others, has become a prayer of an entire community or people, — the Kaddish, — before the supplication that God may suffer His kingdom to become the kingdom of men, there stands the invocation; "Hallowed be his name". Whoever hallows God's name works for the attainment of the kingdom of God. In all that is Messianic there remains the task which is set before man for the sake of men. As another prayer, which belongs to the same Talmudic period, expresses it: "We hope in thee that we may create a world within the kingdom of the Almighty, and that all the sons of men may choose thee." All hope in God points to a task which has to be fulfilled, and

every task which is so fulfilled indicates to men the one way, the way to God, which will unite them. All sanctification of God's name, even as it is a proof of God, provided by man, so it is also a proof of the days to come.

It very soon came about that mystical, or, as, in this connection, they are usually called, eschatological, conceptions became bound up with this Beyond of the days to come as well as they did with the Beyond of the world to come. This was especially so in the centuries of oppression; only the vision of a Fata Morgana gave many ages the strength to carry on through the barren desert to which life was reduced. In those hard times people were fond of "calculating the end", as the Talmud reprovingly calls it. They would build up some fantastic future world; they painted in glaring colours their pictures of the day of judgment and of the millennium. The wide field of Jewish mysticism presents a plethora of such pictures. But they have never been able to exercise any lasting influence on the march of thought; for, in contrast with their ever changing forms, Judaism owns a lasting religious possession which has ever anew assured a clear recollection of the true nature of the kingdom of God. This possession is guaranteed by the fact that the Messianic idea has been closely interwoven since days of old with the two festivals which preach the duty of rendering account to God. Those holy days, the New Year and the Day of Atonement, which aim at introducing into men's souls the commandment of moral responsibility, are also the Messianic festivals.

These two festivals are the only ones which are not connected with particular events in Israel's history. They deal exclusively with that which is universally human. It is that which is universally human which reveals man as a member of mankind. That is why on these festivals we pass from the individual man to mankind. The New Year, the day of reckoning before God, announces the day of judgment for all nations: they also have at all times to undergo examination and judgment; they also, by means of righteousness and truth, must produce evidence before God that they are worthy of their place upon earth. The other holy day, the Day of Atonement, has a similar message; this day too sends out its word to the whole of mankind. It demands from, and promises to,

mankind the Sabbath of Sabbaths as the task and the goal of its striving and battling: all roads are to lead to the great Day of Atonement of the whole world. New Year and Day of Atonement always set the community upon the firm ground of the Messianic idea, of the faith in the One God who vouches for the meaning of all times, who rules in and through world-history, in judgment and love, in holiness and perfect lovingkindness.

The old prayers, which form the nucleus of the divine service on these holy days, show what decisive and clear expression is given to this conception. They contain nothing of esoteric teaching or of fanciful speculation, for everything rests upon the firm ground of religious certainty concerning the course of world-history. Messianic hope presents itself to the soul in the simple, yet great, idea of the responsibility of all nations and their ultimate reconciliation or atonement. The community expresses this hope in the prayer: "Now, therefore, O Lord our God, impose thine awe upon all thy works, and thy dread upon all which thou hast created, so that all thy works may fear thee, and all creatures may prostrate themselves before thee, that they may all form a single band to do thy will with a perfect heart. For we all know, O Lord our God, that dominion is thine, strength is in thy hand, and might in thy right hand, and that thy name is exalted over all which thou hast created."

Judaism acquires thus its wide expanse of horizon. As it directs its gaze beyond the narrowness of the present towards a universal future, and therewith upon the whole of mankind, it is protected against the danger of falling a prey to the petty limitations of historical judgment. The very character of the religion, the emphasis upon moral action, sufficed, as already pointed out, to prevent this; respect had been accorded even to ancient heathen wisdom, for the masters of which the blessing was framed: "Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, who hast given of thy wisdom to flesh and blood." Judaism never lost the power to be just to other religions. The conviction of its own value and its own future, the will for the days to come, the thought of a definite path through history, gave it the spiritual freedom which enabled it to admit the historic importance of all movements which truly possessed it. The Messianic mission of Christianity

and Islam has been acknowledged by Judaism. This insight remained undimmed by the fact that it was scarcely Messianic qualities which Christianity in particular practised towards Judaism. Higher spirits in Judaism realised what a world-historic task was being fulfilled by these two creeds in preparing the path for the days to come, and they did not refrain from admitting this quite openly. The religious literature of Judaism bears witness to this impartiality of judgment. The two most eminent thinkers of the Middle Ages, Jehuda Halevi and Moses Maimonides, express the idea plainly. Though assured of the truth of their own faith, and though convinced of the future triumph of their own religion, they none the less declare emphatically that Christianity and Islam "are preparing for the Messianic times, and leading up to it", that "their vocation is to help in making the road for the coming of the kingdom of God", and that they have succeeded "in spreading the word of the Holy Scriptures to the ends of the earth".

Because of this liberality of thought, Judaism was able all the more freely to stress *its own Messianic task*. The old picture of the future was adhered to: "And it shall come to pass in the latter days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many peoples shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the Law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." The Jewish people became conscious that it was guarding in what was its own a possession for the world, that in its own destiny it was experiencing a prophetic destiny, the destiny of a community which is convinced about the future. Its own history became for it the history of the world. In the world of mere happenings, Judaism stands in solitude; in the world of history, it stands with the others, in their very midst. In the note with which its soul resounded there was audible the note of the world's soul. Judaism cannot conceive of mankind without itself, nor of itself without mankind. Social feeling and social demands, with their conviction, their responsibility and their duty, assume human, even Messianic, proportions.

The old ideas of atonement were re-awakened. When men came to observe the wickedness upon earth, the soul became aware that he who knows God must be the expiation and atonement of those who remain far off from Him. The Biblical story of the city of sin, which could escape destruction for the sake of ten righteous persons, took hold of men's hearts with its profound symbolism. Jewish Rabbinic teaching speaks frequently of the world as depending upon the righteous; their very existence is an expiation upon the earth. "The world exists only for the sake of the pious therein." One of the Prophets had found here the great answer for the problems affecting the community of Israel, and proclaimed to it that here might be discovered the true meaning of its life: its sufferings are sufferings for the atonement of the world. Israel is for him the "Servant of the Lord" — the idea of divine service is thereby personified. He shows this servant of the Lord as him who "has no form nor comeliness that we should look upon him, nor beauty that we should desire him. He was despised and forsaken of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with sickness: as one from whom men hide their face, he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he has borne our sicknesses, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for *our* transgressions, he was bruised for *our* iniquities: the chastisement which led to our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we have been healed. All we like sheep went astray; we turned every one to his own way; and the Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all. . . . It pleased the Lord to bruise him; he made him sick; yet if he make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many: he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he poured out his soul unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors; because he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors".

The way of mankind teaches us the truth that every thinker and discoverer are such for the sake of the many, that every man

who creates anything exists for the sake of others, and that the thinkers, discoverers and creators bear therefore responsibility, burden and service. They are servants of God, carrying the burdens, and effecting the expiation, of the many. To have one's place in mankind means to take one's stand on its behalf, to assume a burden for its sake. Lasting gain has always been achieved through the sufferings of the righteous. Wherever there is a realization of the great, there is also a feeling for the low and the small, for all resisting, encompassing elements; there is also a susceptibility to pain. All volition, every individual path, has its own suffering, its own tragedy. The drama of the small is comedy; tragedy is the history of the great. The possession of individuality has always meant endurance for the sake of that individuality, and this martyrdom for individuality has always been also a martyrdom for the sake of the many. The good, mostly and at first, does not attract; it must force its way, and man must be pushed towards it. If a blessing is to be manifested, it has to fight against the indolence and self-satisfaction of the many, and so the history of thought and commandment is always the history of those who sacrifice themselves, who accept ingratitude and expulsion, who pay with their days for the souls of others. Suffering too has its Messianic quality. From the very beginning all this was to Judaism no mere symbol or mere poetry, but the reality of its life, the theme of its history, the experience of tragedy and of atonement. It experienced the destiny of its individuality. Its peculiar destiny became for Judaism a Messianic preaching. Jews realized how suffering for Judaism meant suffering for the ideal. Suffering was transformed from question to answer, from destiny to commandment and to promise. Knowledge about its own history became a knowledge about that which brings atonement to the world. The field of Judaism began to stretch out to the field of all mankind. The misery of the day and the wealth of expectation became reconciled with one another. Jews realized that in the picture of the Servant of the Lord they might truly see and know themselves. The form of the Servant acquired an eternal quality.

This was the Messianic consolation, with its tension between the facts of today and the future reality. With the same paradox

yet another idea was expressed: the prophetic idea of the "*remnant*." The ancient promise, born of the abundance of hope, had seen Israel in the future as large in number: "The number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered." But, in opposition to that, the knowledge arose, and was realized by one generation after another, that it was always the few who alone were able to bear the burden, and yet remain upright; thus, side by side with the promise of large numbers, the announcement of the Remnant becomes more persistent. The term speaks of the stern laws of life, like the term of the jealous God. History has a sifting effect, for it demands decision; it means a great combing out among the peoples. Suffering has a diminishing effect; men avoid it, especially that suffering which is expected from the Servant of the Lord. Look at the ordinary, and you see large increase; look at the great, and you see a small selection. Comedy has many characters, whilst tragedy is the tragedy of the few, of the lonely. Where great loyalty is demanded, disloyalty soon seeks the door which leads to the many. Where a great commandment and great patience are preached, there the philosophy of flight finds only too soon men to proclaim it. As the descendant of his ancestors, man is born into an idea, into a duty; and there is such a thing too as a falling away from them, as a desertion. For when hardness and pain call, then frequently only the few stand their ground; these are the Remnant. But there is at the same time a consolation in this Messianic term. The Remnant is the justification of history; it has not been fruitless. "The remnant shall return"; thus did Isaiah, amid wavering and fleeing men, name his son for consolation. Perhaps only a few remain in the hour of decision, but it is they who last, they are the men for the days to come; in them is that strength which begets the future. "The holy seed" remains — "as a terebinth and as an oak, whose stock remains when they are felled; so the holy seed is the stock thereof." The old hope of Israel's large numbers is thus, in the last resort, and in a new sense, justified. For the few are, after all, the many, for it is to them that the future belongs. Thus did Judaism experience pain as well as consolation together as its own peculiar experience. It was often compelled to tell of those who faltered, and went

over to the other side, of those who preferred to stand with the many rather than against them, who desired to belong to the multitude, in order to be on safe ground; it had often to speak, even in the sufferings of martyrdom, when the many threw themselves upon the few, of the Remnant of Jacob. But it was also aware, and so was able to remain fearless, that true history is the history of the remnant; it was able to tell of those who did not bend the knee to Baal, and it was convinced that it was they whose lives God would preserve. "And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even everyone that is written among the living in Jerusalem." "And the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah shall again take root downward, and bear fruit upward. For out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant, and out of Mount Zion they that shall escape: the zeal of the Lord of hosts shall perform this."

The Messianic message is the message of suffering as well as of consolation, because it is a teaching of commandment. There is therefore no sentimentality about it; it is no mere vapouring or enthusiasm; it is not mere show or appearance. It is the message of life, of its reality, its secret and its task. There is in it nothing of mere dreaming about the future, which creates visions in the twilight of experience, to be followed by an awakening into everyday life. The man of that sort of experience is the man who ruminates about the future, but remains as he was. The Messianic appeal in Judaism demands the new man who is in earnest with himself; it demands him though the many may desert him and disappear, so that only a remnant remains. It speaks of the peace of the future, but this peace too is not the peace of sentiment and romanticism, but the peace of the commandment. Thus in this idea of peace is also contained a driving and compelling element which is almost revolutionary. Every great idea, every conception which is thought out to the end towards the Messianic goal, is an opposition; every commandment is tantamount to a protest, because it is not concerned with helping the needs of the hour, but demands the days to come and the whole man. Because the few, those few who live for the sake of mankind, are the few in spite of the many, they are those who contradict the many,



repudiating and demanding in the midst of mankind. Because in the Messianic idea there lies an element of the unconditioned and the absolute, there lives in it too an attack upon all indolence and self-sufficiency, an onslaught against the view that that which exists is right simply because it exists, or that compromise is to be proclaimed as final and abiding truth. Every civilization, as it arises, aims at being regarded as something complete, something to be accepted by all. That is why the Messianic idea stands in constant opposition to the self-satisfaction of civilization; for it contains in contrast a denying, a radical, a revolutionary element. It is a leaven in history. A well-known phrase, said in mocking depreciation of Judaism, declares that it constitutes a "ferment of decomposition" in the life of nations. All Messianic teaching is such a religious fermentation, something which upsets and irritates every age which claims to be complete. The religion of Israel began of old with this sort of revolution — with this demand to choose the new road and to be different. This beginning corresponds with the path to the goal to which the religion pointed: a ploughing up, a new shaping and realizing, which constantly and afresh creates the future. This constitutes the very life and strength of the religion, because it commands the service of the Eternal, the service of the One, as opposed to the service of the many, the kingdom of God as opposed to the kingdoms of power. Such is its Messianic quality.

In the Messianic doctrine the idea of atonement finds its completion. Suffering and consolation, the will to fight and the confidence of peace, become reconciled. A treasure has been presented therewith to mankind, something unparalleled in moral resilience and ethical patience. The inner connection with the future is therein contained: the connection becomes plain, because it is, like everything else, the revelation of God. A great confidence comes thus to mankind, conviction in regard to that which is to be, and also conviction as to that which truly is. Here again is shown the contrast with Buddhism. The latter lacks the conception of history; hope for the future and the goal of the kingdom of God are beyond its horizon. Its attitude towards the days to come is one of resignation. That is also the very deficiency which characterizes the humanist philosophy of the Greeks; as

has rightly been pointed out, it lacks enthusiasm, and thus also the great yearning; the faith and the expectation of those who know that they have been entrusted with a mission is foreign to it. Even in comparison with Christianity, Judaism may well lay stress on the peculiarity of its Messianic message: the marked definiteness with which it regards the kingdom of God, not as something which has been made, but as something which is growing, not as a religious possession of the elect, but as the moral task of all. In Judaism man sanctifies the world by sanctifying God in it, by triumphing over evil and realising good; the kingdom of God lies before him so that he may begin his work, and it lies before *him*, because it lies before *all*. The whole of mankind has been chosen. The covenant of God was made with it, and with each individual in it. Man's creed is that he believes in God, and therefore in mankind, but not that he believes in a creed.

With the Messianic idea a feature of greatness, or, what is the same thing, a great unity, enters into morality. Morality acquires its monotheistic character. Likewise with history; its chaos becomes a cosmos; spirit enters it. Wherever the Messianic idea is lacking or becomes faint, there dualism takes ultimate possession of religion; the kingdom of faith and the kingdom of works become separated, because salvation has already occurred, whereas works are always going on; the comprehensive unity of the kingdom of God, its monotheism, comes to an end. The growing world, which should be filled with the divine, is emptied of the divine, because the divine rests upon that which has already come to be. The kingdom of God, or, as the old image says, the Shechinah, the dwelling-place of God, is removed from the world, and the world which ought to be the revelation of God, becomes a mere world. Its creations, namely states and communities, all the works of the world, now stand beside or behind a finished religion, and the moral element in them which, instead of being the human that should bear witness to the divine, becomes in the end nothing but the social means of bridling the world; it becomes something which is regarded as right convention, something written down and established. Morality becomes permeated with politics, and dualism, by separating the domain

of faith from that of action, provides the occasion and the justification for compromising with, and capitulating to, everything that is in the world. The voice of the commandment, of decision and fulfilment, which from the beginning right on to its goal would desire to cry out to all that are in the world, this voice of perfect confidence, becomes silent. Not until the Messianic idea re-awakens to life, does this commanding and all-embracing conviction arise again; the one single kingdom of God is again understood, or, to employ the image once more, the Shechinah is re-established in the world. Faith in the divine in all men is regained: that is, faith in the One God; the great glory is restored to religion and morality, the Messianic confidence which unites the world, its different ages and its different countries together, which unites each present time with the future of all times. Man is called upon "to prepare the way of the Lord".

In this faith alone does the history of man find its meaning, and the meaning of the life of man its history. The larger life of mankind also finds its devotion and its task, its consecration and its commandment. The bond uniting the generations is now firmly established in the covenant which God has made with mankind in its unity and in its entirety. Each generation receives its due, both what is hidden and what is definite, from the preceding generation, without being able to give anything back in return; it should, therefore, hand on, fulfilled and enriched, to the future, that which it owes to the past. So it is in the life of the individual: we pay back to our children what we received from our parents. So it should be in the history of mankind. Each age exists for the age to come; each must help to fashion the kingdom of God, producing unity, and realizing the future. That is the meaning of world-history. Here is shown our faith in mankind. The infinite, the eternal, enters into history: the single secret, the single commandment. "And it shall come to pass in the last days...."

### III. THE PRESERVATION OF JUDAISM

#### HISTORY AND TASK

Every pre-supposition and every aim of Judaism are directed towards the conversion of the world to itself — or to be more precise: not so much to converting, as to teaching it. This is essential to its faith in God as also to its faith concerning man. As a fact, when the struggle for religious existence permitted for the first time a period of repose, no longer requiring all available forces, the preaching to the nations was soon begun. With the advance of the diaspora, which extended the range of the Jewish community beyond the borders of its old homeland, teaching and missionary work kept pace; the domain of believers spread thereby beyond the limits of the Jewish people. It was a teaching which knew no compromise. The records of the times are evidence of its steady advance and its great success. The first diffusion of Christianity is quite unthinkable without the tilling of the field of paganism by Judaism, or the support rendered by the Jewish provincial communities. A promising Jewish dissemination was ready to grow and to bear fruit, when something occurred which struck the very roots, and ruined the expected harvest. With the violence of an earthquake the foundations of Jewish life were widely shaken by two fruitless risings, risings not of greed, but of the spirit and the will, with which the diaspora under Trajan, and the homeland under Hadrian, stood up against Roman rule. Hundreds of thousands died. The victors knew no mercy; their victims were bled white.

The consequences were fateful; they became of historic importance. An abundance of life had been paralysed and destroyed; such strength as remained had to be used for the purpose of self-preservation. Even this was restricted to the utmost by measures of persecution; to profess Judaism openly was for many years actual martyrdom. Judaism's own domain lay devastated and in ruins; who could think of looking beyond its borders? The religious field, which had been conquered and well cultivated,

had now to be given up, and into its forsaken borders Christianity made its entry. For it was then that the great expansion of Christianity took place, the more so since its political situation began then also to improve. Moreover, something else helped to bar the way which could lead Jewish thought beyond the Jewish pale. The cruelty with which the victor enforced the rights of his sovereignty caused violent aversion to *his* world, — the world of the Roman Empire and of paganism; in solemn opposition Judaism turned away from it. The opposition between the two was intensified. The national sufferings begot national defiance, and virulent condemnation of all that was foreign and non-Jewish. Hellenistic literature, which had been such a successful apostle of the Jewish religion, was summarily ejected. The speech of Greece was silenced in the cities of Judah, till at last it was entirely forgotten. It is a merit of the Church, which must be gratefully acknowledged, that, in taking over throughout the occident the possessions of its mother, it preserved the treasure of that literature.

When, later on, these old memories had lost their sting, and the wounds had become partially healed, the new world power had meanwhile entered upon the inheritance of Rome. The *Church* stood before Judaism, and her desire for power, like her pride of possession, could not but see in Judaism a stumbling-block. She was able to regard paganism as being far below herself, for its religion was nothing but delusion and superstition. But whether she wished to or not, she had to acknowledge the Jews, though with reservations; she had to concede that Judaism possessed something of value. The Jews had their word of God, which the Church too called revelation. When she spoke of the new gifts which had been assigned to *her*, she had always at the same time to speak of the old teaching which had been allotted to the Jews before her coming; the promises, the fulfilment of which *she* preached, had once been made to *them*. In spite of everything, and with reluctance, she felt that she was, after all, an heir, the heir of living beings. Moreover, these living beings were not satisfied to be merely superseded and done with, but they looked to the future; they invoked that which was yet to come over against that which had already come. Though subjected, they

stood there as desiring to refute and contradict. Thus Judaism was a living protest against the all-embracing predominance of the Church. All efforts to convert the Jews were of no avail. Like a block of granite, bearing witness to the thousand years of the past, and claiming all time as its own, Judaism towered up in the midst of an alien world.

Thus begins the great and fruitless struggle of the Church and the nations against Judaism. Soon indeed did the sufferings of the fathers become the sins of the children. The Church persecuted Judaism with the despotism of a Diocletian, with all the resources of invention, all the devices of torture and force, which had been the painful experience of her own ancestors. Inventive energy, sufficient to convert deserts into gardens of God, was turned to tormenting and oppressing the Jews. All instruments of torture were applied in the attempt to overthrow them; then, when their persecutors saw them in the misery, which they themselves had brought upon them, they found pleasant consolation in the thought that it was God who rejected them. Hatred was added to insult; the story of all that has been inflicted upon Judaism in the course of the centuries is marked with the inscription: *proprium est humani generis odisse quem laeseris*. This hatred was in vain, just as the struggle was in vain; every attempt at conquest had to admit eventual failure in regard to Judaism, and had to reckon with it.

A wall of hostile laws was then erected to separate the Jews from the Christians, in order to give the impression that they did not exist in the world, and no less with the purpose of depriving them of every possibility of religious influence. This was successfully accomplished. The compulsory walls of the Ghetto grew higher and higher; the Jews were cut off from the outside world. Those who endured this existence, all within the Ghetto walls, had their own spiritual possessions, and were fully conscious of them. But they were able to talk of these possessions to themselves alone; they could not convey them outside. How were they, who were prisoners in the various countries, cut off from the world, to promulgate their religion to the world outside? Moreover, to become a convert to Judaism meant at that time to fall a victim to the stake. To reproach the Jews for not having

preached their religion for so long a time would be the same as to reproach a prisoner in irons for not walking out of his prison. But Jewish *ideas* always kept escaping and getting out. And if, at any time or place, a breathing space was allowed them, the former teaching and converting force revived. The history of the Jews in Arabia, of the Chazars, and many individual instances, are evidence of this.

These, however, were rare occurrences; the dire need of the moment scarcely permitted men to find any edification in them. The hard struggle for religious existence demanded *all* available strength. Only complete devotion, and a constant readiness for self-sacrifice, were able to exist in Judaism, and to maintain its existence. All capacity had to be turned in this direction; spiritual self-preservation laid claim to all resources. Yet, through this very self-preservation, the Jews were able to be convinced that they lived among mankind. The Jewish community realized that in its religious possessions it was preserving also the promise of the future. It was appreciated that *mere existence might be a form of promulgation*, a sermon to the world. In the idea that the nations of the earth were destined first to enter into the orbit of two other religions, some Jews saw the meaning of history; they perceived that the roads leading to the goal were long. They recognized the more in their own life that which alone would constitute the future; they realized that to cling to the future they must cling to themselves. The mere fact that they existed was of significance, and just as duty is without end, so is significance without conclusion. To persevere and to abide as the community which makes no concessions; to be in the world, and yet to be different from the world; to be a vessel of strength: that was the task, fulfilled throughout the centuries with incomparable earnestness and unshakeable courage. In all strength there slumbers the miracle, that which goes beyond strength. Self-preservation was experienced as preservation by God. The Jews remained true to themselves, and thus experienced that God remains true. They read the words of the Prophets, issueing from the times when earthly powers declined, and their idols fell, and those who served them became weary: "Hearken unto me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, which have been borne by me

from the belly, which have been carried from the womb: yea, even to old age I am he, and even to hoar hairs will I carry you: I have made, and I will bear; yea, I will carry, and will deliver." Thus did past and future speak to one another again and again.

So it was that self-preservation acquired its religious quality; it contained something of the recognition of God. Again, self-preservation was, on the other hand, a kind of religious obligation; it was almost the thanks which religion demanded. Religion gave to existence its true, its inward, quality; but it was also necessary to give existence to religion. The life of the Jews was the life of Judaism; whoever preserved this life was also preserving religion. In this world, here below, truth, in order to exist, requires the existence of men, who take it to themselves — and Judaism especially requires their existence, since it must never dwell in a habitation of power, but only within those who live within it. According to an old saying, Israel was called into existence for the sake of the Torah; but the Torah, too, can live here below only through its people. Only in the ideal sphere could it exist alone; it would have disappeared from the earth, had this Jewish people no longer existed. Upon this people, which must live, thought and care must, therefore, be concentrated. Care for Judaism became also care for the Jews. All education had to aim at this preservation, the preservation of men for the sake of their special peculiarity and their special spiritual possessions, so that they might live, not merely for the sake of living, but for the sake of living in Judaism. For, as justified by God, the Jewish right to existence was dependent upon the Jews retaining their peculiarity, and upon their remaining different from the world around. All education was directed to this end. To become different was the law of existence. According to ancient interpretation, this was the meaning of the ordinance of Leviticus XIX, 2, and it is even more clearly expressed in Leviticus XX, 26: "You shall be different, for I the Lord your God am different; if you keep different, then you belong to me, but if not, then you belong to the great Babylon and its fellowship." That is how an essential part of the commandment of holiness came to be understood. So, indeed, had Judaism been, in order that so only it might continue to be: *unancient in the ancient world, unmodern in the modern world*. So the Jew, as a Jew, had to be the great



*nonconformist* of history, its *great dissenter*. He existed for that very purpose. It was for that purpose that the fight for religion had to be a fight for self-preservation. It contained no thought of might, for that would have been its very contradiction: not might, but individuality, personality for the sake of the eternal, *not might, but strength*. The Jewish existence stands for strength in the world. And strength is greatness.

As often as the necessity of the struggle for self-preservation renewed its hold upon thought and hope, the necessity to be equipped for it was also felt. The suitable religious means and devices had to be found — the “signs” pointing Godward — in order to awaken the sense of Jewish peculiarity, and to quicken it again and again, thus uniting spiritually the members of the whole community with one another. The greater the dangers which threatened from outside, and also occasionally from inside, the more imperative did this necessity become. The more fitting some factor was to provide the community with strength of resistance, and make it more capable of guarding its religious possessions, — the more fitting it was to educate the new generation in an inner corporate life and to connect it with past generations, as well as with future ones, — the more valuable did this factor prove to be for the community. These means were not intended, in the first instance, to serve the religious idea and its goal, but to be of use to those who *carried* the religious idea, who had to assert and maintain it in the world. It was not the religious welfare and the religious duty of the individual which was here of primary importance, but rather the *safe-guarding of Jewish religious possessions through the existence of the community as a whole*. It was not religion as such which was of primary consideration, but rather the religious *constitution*, the unity and common character of the outward religious forms of life. The community as a whole had to be given a certain bond of inter-connectedness, a certain continuity in the manner of its life. This fact must be recognized, if one wishes to understand and to appreciate the means. The purpose to be achieved related more to the Jewish people, the people of religion, the people which is to abide, than to the individual; for in this people of religion the individual becomes the Jewish individuality.

Attention, it is true, was also always directed to the sanctification of the individual, but this sanctification was to be attained by means of the upbuilding and preservation of the holy community. All that fulfilled this task assumed the meaning and the force of a duty of the whole body and *towards* it. Indeed, it sometimes retained this significance yet longer, even though its original cause had disappeared with the passage of time, or though its effect had, perhaps, changed.

For the sake of comparison, it might be mentioned that a similar need had also manifested itself in the Church, above all during times when the different sections of Christianity were at strife with one another. Since, in the Church, the stress was laid upon faith, it was *articles of faith*, or dogmas, which had to serve *there* the purpose of linking the community together, and of fitting it for resistance. It is, for instance, surely not a mere coincidence that, at the time when the secular power of the pope began to totter, and Catholicism seemed thus to be in danger, dogma should have acquired new strength as a weapon of defence in the struggle. Similarly, it was not a mere coincidence that the anxiety for those "signs" and forms had begun to show itself most decisively in Judaism, just when an old bond was broken, and the old homeland of Judaism and the State, which had kept the individuals together, were ruined and destroyed. It need not be emphasized that even apart from the special cause just mentioned, dogma has been of great and manifold importance in the Christian Church. But that is no reason why its importance for that other purpose should be left out of account. It is especially valuable to point this out in order that the often misunderstood nature of the corresponding ideas and purposes in Judaism may be better appreciated; it is just the contrast between the one religion and the other which brings out this important common aim.

The difference is indeed an essential one. In Judaism, and herein is expressed its innermost being, it is a *demand*, the demand for *definite* deeds, in which anxiety for the preservation of the holy community is expressed. The individual is here too considered as a religious personality, to whom the commandment is directed; the individual must join in the creation of the community, and in the making of the bond which binds the community together

and preserves it; he maintains the community. To the tasks set by the Jewish faith in God and in man are added the duties based upon the commandment for the continued existence of the religious society and for the adhesion to it, which have also to be fulfilled by deeds. In proportion to the severity and duration of the struggle which Judaism had to carry on, these duties are exceedingly numerous. They include the manifold statutes, forms, customs, and institutions, as, e. g. the dietary and Sabbath rules, which were specially devised and elaborated in the Talmud, and are usually given the collective, but erroneous, name of the ceremonial Law. They serve, as has been said, not the religious idea itself, but mainly as the protection it requires, as the security for its existence through the existence of the religious community. This, and this alone, is the primary measure of their value.

The significance which belongs to them is characteristically expressed in the Talmudic phrase which describes them as "the fence around the Law". They do not constitute the doctrine of Judaism, but they are a barricade for it. This distinction has been maintained; the religion itself was not confused with these statutes, nor were the two regarded as interchangeable. One bit of evidence is clear and definite for this distinction: the performance of a ceremonial statute is never regarded as a "good deed"; only religious and ethical action is so called. But that is not the only evidence. The great confession of sins, which was drawn up for the Day of Atonement, concerns the ethical conduct of life, in all its ramifications, and it alone. Though its boundaries are far-reaching, trying to embrace the whole gamut of human failings, there is no mention of a violation of the ceremonial statutes; the transgression of the ethical law alone appears as a sin. The strongest proof is, perhaps, this: the Talmud does not refrain from declaring openly that all these institutions and customs will ultimately lose their binding force, and that their final destiny is to render themselves superfluous. In the days of the Messiah, that is, when the struggle for the preservation of the Jewish community will have attained its goal of peace, they will have reached the end of their validity, and they will be allowed to cease. It is impossible to draw a sharper distinction than there is

here between the true duties which are demanded by religion, and the duties which serve only for its preservation.

If the peculiar quality of this "fence" has unfortunately been frequently mistaken or misinterpreted, especially in the interest of a Christian construction of history, this is partly due to an old translation's misunderstanding, and partly to the error caused by old polemics. The Greek translation of the Bible, the Septuagint, the very first to be undertaken, renders the word Torah, "teaching", by the word *nomos*, "law". A literal translation would have been unsatisfactory, since the two conceptions do not convey quite the same meaning in the two languages; the word "law" seemed to be more appropriate, since to the Greeks it struck an august, solemn and authoritative note, which touched a religious note as well; it was suited to produce in the Hellenic mind the conception of divine teaching as contrasted with human teaching. But this word *Nomos* or Law became susceptible to misunderstanding, since it suggested the idea of bondage, compulsion, and even of despotism, above which we can be at last uplifted into freedom. The polemic of Paul's epistles makes special use of this suggested implication and stresses it. Here the new covenant, as the covenant of Faith, is placed in opposition to the old one, as the covenant of Law. The Law is something lesser and lower, something temporary, which has been supplanted by something else. Judaism, the religion of law, is superseded by the religion of grace, which tells of the miracle which can happen to man, and which signifies everything, so that he has but to wait in order to receive it. Compared with this miracle, all human action and activity vanish, and are valueless in the relationship between God and man, and between man and God.

It is not inaccurate, if, in contrast thereto, Judaism is called a religion of law; for it is the religion of the commandment, of the law of God, the religion which tells man what God demands of him, which leaves the decision and the determination with *him*, which demands of him fulfilment of the will of God and the law concerning the good, and expects something definite out of this, his deed. In the epistles of Paul, law is, in fact, more than anything else, religious and ethical commandment, the categorical, the "Thou shalt", all which man has to choose and to realize.

"Honour thy father and thy mother", "strive after righteousness", "love thy neighbour as thyself" — all this constitutes "law". Yet not this alone, but also all which goes to make up the fence around the Teaching, the fence around the Law, is with Paul "law" in the same sense, and it is given the same name. Both are here combined in a single conception: the moral and the ritual. Both are of less value than faith, and both, compared with faith, are of no significance for the covenant between God and man.

This combination and this conception of Law were misunderstood, or completely forgotten, in polemical attacks against Judaism, especially in later times, when some people began to waver in their Christian faith, and so sought wearily in history for the special or novel feature of their faith. Judaism had to be depreciated by representing it as a legal religion, and through its legalism characterized by rigid formalism and outwardness. But it became increasingly difficult to regard the commandments about justice and love, which to Paul are also law, as law in that bad sense and construction, which the words Law and Legalism had been made to acquire. Thus the so-called "ceremonial" commandments had to take the blame; they *were the Law*, as meaning something inferior and bad; and to the present day they serve as grounds for reproaching Judaism with being a religion of Law. Since Judaism had to be represented as essentially a *legal* religion, there remained no alternative but to regard these ceremonial statutes as the most important part of the Jewish religion: they are supposed to stand on a level of complete equality with the commandments of love and justice, if indeed they do not drive these below their own level of value and importance. The doctrine of Paul, which put morality side by side with ritual, was foisted upon Judaism. Thus, in accordance with this false equality, the Jewish Law, in the interpretation of the Church, was described as mere outward service, something which has significance and value in itself as mere mechanical deed, a kind of sacramental act. This had to be done because only by degrading their opponents could men gain a conception of the loftiness of their own creed.

On all this too is based the reproach of the "burden of the law." Such a burden has very seldom been felt in Judaism, incomparably less indeed than many a Christian denomination has

felt the burden of its own "law", namely *dogma*. The contrary, indeed, is the case. The history of Judaism bears witness that all these statutes were an element in the joy of life; it is even legitimate to speak of the spiritual joys which they awaken. The term, "the joy of the commandments", was also applied to them. The experience of each generation has confirmed this assertion ever anew. Only those who did not possess them, or know of them, the outsiders, have spoken so much about the "burden of the law". Jewish piety has always possessed this joyful element, however much it stressed the idea of the commandment and of service; to this service the old metaphor relating to the ark of the covenant may be applied: "The ark of the covenant supports those who support it." All obedience to a commandment which man imposes upon himself supports him, lifts him up into a special sphere. This was not least so in regard to faithfulness to all those "ceremonial" statutes. A spiritual world, full of devotion and duty, was discovered in them, and each day gave them new life. The delight covered a wide range of activity.

It could not be otherwise. For they are by no means neutral precepts of no account. They achieve their peculiarity and their religious worth by seeking to bind life to God with innumerable ties, with "ties of love". The old blessing which declares that God has "sanctified us by his commandments" has to precede each one of them, and the saying of R. Chananya was referred also to them: "God was pleased to make Israel worthy: wherefore he gave them a copious Torah and many commandments." With ever fresh symbols they endeavour to keep man far from all that is low and common, to awaken in him that earnest, and yet joyful, consciousness before Whom it is that he is always standing. They do not seek to lead man away from his own environment; they leave him to his work and his home; it is there and thence that they connect him with God. They demand inwardness, a soul for the action of the hour, and exercise their influence over both. Each morning, afternoon and evening, each beginning and end, has its special prayers, its worship; thus divine worship secured a place in every day, just as it did in daily and ordinary life. The atmosphere of the house of God, the magic of religious devotion, are spread over the whole of existence; each day finds its admoni-

tion and its consecration; the Law helped to prevent religion from becoming a mere religion for the Sabbath. So, too, sacraments, with their separation of holiness from life, have been specially overcome by the introduction of holiness into life.

This was, above all, true of home life. Within the Jewish community every home is, in a way, a community in itself, and all the customs and precepts, which are meant to preserve the community, tend likewise to create the home and to guard it. They become the "fence" around the Jewish home. The work-a-day and prosaic character of the home gains consecration through them; they have succeeded in sanctifying the earthly. An abundance of symbols was created, through which religious ideas found their language. Sabbaths and festivals received their poetic charm, their atmosphere; in their holy domain men could breathe pure air after all the dust and oppression outside. Just as the Law brought consecration and spirituality to Sabbaths and festivals, so it brought them also to all joy. It added purity to leisure, and distinction to the evening, in both of which are most distinctly revealed the character and freedom of man, his seeking and his wishing. Divine peace reigns within the protecting "fence"; the fence did not make life narrow, but guarded and fortified it. All these statutes were established simply for the purpose of protecting the religion, but they achieved even more; they enriched the content of religion, and they enriched piety.

It is true that these statutes were enormously expanded — far too greatly expanded, it would sometimes seem. They did not all claim equal significance, and small scruples were felt about discarding certain ordinances which had become either unnecessary or superfluous. But, on the whole, the prevailing tendency was ever to establish new ones. It is also true that the far-reaching dialectical treatment to which they have been subjected by Jewish scholarship through the centuries has produced much that is petty and meticulous, and has led much intellectual effort into mere arid deserts. At such times, and in such instances, mysticism had its justification. But it must not be forgotten that the effect of this intellectual labour, however petty its product, was an incomparable blessing from the personal point of view. There is also contained in it that earnestness of Jewish thought and

action, that tendency to reason a thing thoroughly out, and to draw out inferences to the logical end, that energy which puts its heart and soul into everything, and refuses to be satisfied with any compromise. The spirit of penetration, the tendency towards intensification, which is characteristic of Jewish religiousness, also played its part, and sated itself, in this peculiar dialectic. Above all, considered as labour in the field of knowledge, it aroused the interest of the whole community, and in times of the greatest affliction, when the burden of anxiety for the needs of the day and for the security of the night threatened to weigh down everything, it inspired a vivid intellectual alertness. This dialectic taught the Jews to think, to ponder, and to investigate, for the sake of an ideal purpose only.

As a result of this unselfish occupation with the Torah, it came about that that persecuted and hunted community, which it was sought to degrade, so as to cause it to become a people of petty traders, became a community of thinkers, of whom it can truly be said: "His delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night", — a community in which with the highest possible degree of earnestness the command was taken: "And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be upon thine heart . . . and thou shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." But, what is perhaps even more significant, it is also as true to say that it became, by virtue of the large extent of the Law, a community of priests. Earnestness showed itself also in the realization that, in the realm of religion, everything which is understood becomes a demand, that the consistency of thought asks also for the same consistency in action, and that something can become Torah only when all carry it out. This is another reason why these ceremonial ordinances are so numerous, extending often even to the smallest and most trifling things in life. Everything is demanded of everybody. That is also why, by practising and observing them all, ethical activity and ready ethical dutifulness were neither reduced nor limited. Jewish life shows how these qualities were strengthened and developed, how they were multiplied and enriched. All these ordinances made a demand upon the religious will; they, therefore, never placed



themselves *between* man and his God, but rather constantly reminded man *of* God. Though the doing of them was not considered to be virtuous action, they were, nevertheless, able to vivify activities for virtue. From the same spiritual root sprang the will to martyrdom and this consistency in the Law. To live, as also to die, became in Judaism a divine service.

It need only be mentioned how it was just the Law which connected the occurrences of daily life with *neighbourly love*. Everything in life, every joy, every sorrow, was turned into commandments of lovingkindness. It became a statute for Sabbaths and festivals; the days of rejoicing in the Lord became admonitions of charity. All compassion, even towards an unknown stranger, received a distinctly personal character; the stranger, who expectantly knocked at the door, was the guest for whom a place at the table had to be prepared. The Law in Judaism is social. As to the living, so pious custom showed lovingkindness also to the dead; this lovingkindness was called by the old Rabbis the "true love of one's neighbour", because it is the most unselfish kind of love, the love which does not desire or expect gratitude or thanks. The care for the deceased is not left to indifferent traders and artisans; all care for him is the personal proof of love which the men and women of the community owe him. It is one more divine "service" practised by the community. As in so many other things, so here too is revealed the emotional element contained in the Law.

*Family life* in particular has been carefully protected by the "fence", and not least of all, the purity and warmth of the home have been protected by it. A severe and pure conception of marriage, which was not based upon ideas of antiquity, especially Asiatic antiquity, received free development in Judaism, and became there a complete reality. It has remained so amid a world full of immorality. The Jewish religious community has always been justly proud of the faithful purity of its family life. The ancient statute already saw in marriage a "sanctification", and therewith a duty which is to be fulfilled, an ethical task imposed upon man; only husband and wife, together, united for life, can bring the spirit of God, the spirit of holiness, into the home. Thus that family confidence was awakened which, notwithstanding all

suffering and misery, was never lost, that family courage, which found in the home, which was filled and throbbed with life, the enriching blessing of God. Family feeling and religious feeling established between them a covenant of pious trust. Childlike reverence and childlike piety have ever anew given to that covenant its justification. To this result too the Law in no small measure contributed.

In a similar way it achieved in all domains of life other results of which history tells us. It taught gratitude for the hours of life; it pointed to that which stands out in everyday life, namely, the good deed, and it made vivid the consciousness of Him who blesses. It taught obedience and self-discipline, moderation and sobriety, renunciation and self-control; by the abundance of its forms it declared the law of the domination of thought over desire. Without lessening the joy of life, it preached that great truth, which is the special truth of all those who have to fulfil their own special duties upon earth: learn to renounce; and so it gave to joy its inner freedom and its justification. Religion cannot do without a certain measure of asceticism, without the power to forbid within the life of every day and its desires. In this direction the Law often made extensive demands, but, in so doing, it confirmed men's inner independence and resisting power, and so gave them the capacity of being stronger than that which is of the earth earthly. It sought to introduce a spiritual element into everything. More particularly, in the indispensable needs of the day and of the body, where license with its temptation stands before man, did it establish its statutes — not in order to deaden and mortify the body, not to introduce that sort of asceticism which finds in ascetic actions an end in itself, but in order to discipline the will, — the asceticism of the man who yet lives a full and ordinary human life. The demands of the Law became greater and greater in the course of centuries, but it was their very profusion which nourished the ethical will and created the soil out of which the strength of martyrdom was able to grow, the power, which is not a gift of God, but a task which everybody can fulfil. The numerous statutes contributed to making right action a matter of course. They prevented men being satisfied with feelings that surge up only to die away; they accustomed men to quiet, indefatigable

action for the sake of God. Thus, besides assuring the survival of the community, they helped to educate the conscience. The Law was the great pedagogue.

It is easy to ask whether this fence, which surrounded, and still surrounds, Judaism, was really necessary. In history everything which fulfils a definite and required task is necessary; that which accomplishes something, and remains within the domain of the good, is justified. This, at any rate, we know for certain, that by this fence the Jewish community maintained its individuality in the midst both of a hostile and a friendly world. But nobody knows what its existence would have been without it. The only answer, therefore, to the question is that we must acknowledge with gratitude what the fence has been, and what it is capable of being. It is not unchanging or unchangeable; in spite of everything it possesses elasticity. For so long must we preserve it, according to the life of our own day, in order that it may protect the existence, and so also the task, of Judaism, until the struggle is over, and the complete truth of the sabbath of sabbaths, which, according to the ancient saying, "shall last for ever", has been fulfilled. But that great day of atonement, for the sake of which Judaism guards its separate existence, has not yet arrived.

Yet, with the solemn earnestness of self-preservation which the Law serves, the task which is set to Judaism in the midst of the world even today is not exhausted. This task assumes also another definite form, in which it is established as an absolute religious duty for every individual. It has already been shown, how in Judaism the ethical deed, and it alone, bears the impression of the "sanctification of God's name", the Kiddush ha-Shem. Every good action, which is born of pure intention, sanctifies God's name, and every base action desecrates it. The good which is wrought by anybody is the clearest proof, the best possible witness, of God. This applies to the whole world. It is, at the same time, the most impressive sermon about the truth of religion, more impressive than the richest richness of words can ever make that truth be heard. Religion reveals itself through *us* in all its reality and force. Every individual, even if the gift of speech is denied or refused him, can thus become the messenger of his faith among men, and everybody should be such a messenger.

Every Jew is called upon to manifest the meaning of his religion by the conduct of his life. He should so live and act that all men may see what his religion is, and of what it is capable, how it sanctifies man, educating and exalting him to become a true member of the "holy nation". This is *the commandment of mission, which is set to everybody*, and, so long as he has not done justice to it, no Jew has fulfilled his obligation to the community.

It conforms to the innermost nature of Judaism that we must preach our religion, above all, through our actions, and that our life should speak of the exaltedness of our faith. This test becomes a standard for our actions: will our actions bear witness to Judaism, will they hold good before God, and will they lead men to a recognition of Judaism, to a true respect for the religiousness which lives in it? Every one should practise the good for *the honour of religion*, and he should refrain from sin so as not to become a false witness in regard to the religious community to which he belongs. This is the sanctification of God's name; it means the constant promulgation of Judaism: "When Israel fulfils the will of God, then the name of God is exalted in the world." This sanctification of God becomes thus interwoven with the teachings of Judaism as with a thousand threads; it becomes part of every exhortation and of every commandment. One thing beyond everything is deeply impressed upon all: the slightest wrong done to the follower of another religion weighs more heavily than a wrong done to a Jew; for it profanes God's name, it degrades the honour of Judaism. From an ethical point of view, the two wrongs are equal; according to the standard of the commandment of mission, the one is more than the other. This feeling of responsibility for the reputation and the task of the religious community, this consciousness of the duty of ethical and religious mission, have never disappeared. They have always been a bond of union. As one generation passes away, the next generation, taking upon itself the task of the past, has to utter the words of the old *kaddish* prayer: "Exalted and sanctified be God's name in the world which he created, according to His will!" One generation after another is to preach Judaism by deed.

It is only through this personal close connection with the task of religion, through this personal working for it, that the individual

became a true *member of the community*. To belong fully to the community he must make profession of his faith through his actions, and so become a witness for all; all profession of faith has its value only so far as it implies the will to fulfilment and realisation. Thus alone can a minority more especially be equal to its religious task, and it is therefore understandable and of essential value, that the commandment to sanctify God's name should occupy a central position in Judaism. The whole missionary duty is imposed upon each individual; he holds in his hands the reputation of the whole community; to him applies that saying of Hillel: "If I am here, then everyone is here." Everyone, even the most insignificant, has a claim to the commandment; it finds a place for all. Not only as a human being, as the image of God, has he this claim, but also as a member of the religious community, as a vehicle and guarantee of its life. The historical fact that the Jews are always in a minority intensifies and spiritualizes the ethical task: it is imposed upon everyone that he should so conduct his life that the "kingdom of priests" should be here on earth, that the few should be distinguished in their morality, and thereby, spiritually, be more than the many.

Every individual Jew becomes thus a creator of religion and of its significance, and a creator of the community. Here we have again that peculiarity of Jewish religiousness, that it both lays its commands upon man, and attributes to him the power of creation. In the Church, the individual is supported by the Church; it existed before him, and is more than he; in its faith he stands, and with and by his faith he lives. In Judaism, there is no Church; the community takes its place. The community lives in the individual; it is subsequent to him, and exists through him; his duty is to support it, and only through *his* prayer is *its* prayer. Wherever there are Jews, fulfilling the commandments of religion, though their number may be small, the Jewish community exists; the whole of Judaism exists there. A Church always tries to be a Church of the many; it yields in the end to the idea of power; few 'Churches' have so far escaped this fate. The community is always a community of the few, and to each of the few the entire religion is commanded; upon each one of them it is imposed. The community is a combination of strength and of

the sanctification of God's name; its genius is to be small in order to be great.

In this sense Judaism may be called the *community* within the world. It would often appear that this is the task of Judaism, which it has also to fulfil even by its mere existence, namely, to give expression in the history of the world to the idea of the *community*, of standing alone, the *ethical principle of the minority*. Judaism bears witness to the power of the idea as against the power of mere numbers and of outward success; it stands for the enduring protest of those who seek to be true to their own selves, of those who claim to be different, as against the crushing pressure of the victor and the leveller, who want all to think alike. This attitude is itself a constant preaching to the peoples of the world, to all who have ears to hear. Judaism, by its mere existence, is a never silent protest against the assumption that the multitude can be greater than right, that force may be the ruler over truth, that in the battle between spirit and the utilities, profit may have the last word. As long as Judaism continues, nobody will be able to say that the soul of man has allowed itself to be subjugated. Its existence through the centuries is by itself proof that conviction cannot be mastered by numbers. The mere fact of Judaism's existence shows that it is impossible to conquer the spirit, that the spirit can make men invincible, and that though spirit and mind may sometimes assume the appearance of an extinct volcano — Judaism has often been depicted thus — power yet dwells in them, power which quietly renews itself, and breaks out afresh, and causes movement. The few, who are the few for the sake of God and for the sake of the spirit, are they who abide, and it is from them that the great and decisive effects, the fresh directions in history, emanate. In respect of this fact alone one is often tempted to use a well-known phrase, and to say: "If Judaism did not exist, one would have to invent it." Without minorities there can be no world-historic goal.

Because it has been a minority, Judaism has become a measuring test for the height to which morality has risen upon earth. What the Jewish community has experienced from the nations among which it lived, has always been a measure of the extent of right and justice among the nations. For all justice is justice for the few.

What Israel, which gave of its faith to mankind, *receives* back from mankind in religion and religious justice, always reveals clearly the change and development of religion. From Israel's lot men could judge how far they have yet to go until the days of the Messiah. When Israel can live securely among the nations, then the promised times will have arrived, for then and thereby it will be proved that faith in God has become a living reality. The significance of Judaism is not only contained in its character and in its ideas, but equally in its history among the nations. Thus this history is itself a deed.

Until this Messianic time arrives, many days will come and go, and with them the many demanding and testing hours, asking and answering. It requires religious courage, courage to think and to await, to belong to a minority, which Judaism always has been and always will be, especially among majorities which so often allow might to triumph over right. It requires ethical courage to be a Jew, when worldly comforts, honours, and prizes often lure the Jew over to the other side. Jews have very frequently had to fight a battle between ideas and interests, a battle between belief and unbelief. It is the peculiarity of the Jewish spirit to be rooted in conscience and in the fear of God, not merely to want to see, but to see the right, not merely to know, but to know the good. Therefore it possesses the capacity of not allowing itself to be conquered by time; it has the strength of resistance against all powers and multitudes, against all which seeks only to rule and to oppress. It is, therefore, its peculiarity to keep on seeking, never thinking that it has reached the end and the conclusion; it is always demanding, without rest or easy contentedness. It implies a persistent quest for knowledge for the sake of the commandment, a never tiring will for the ideal, a demand to sacrifice itself constantly and never to give up. It is the gift to comprehend the revelation of God, to see the future and to cry out to it, to draw together the manifold into a unity. If in all this the Jewish spirit has its peculiarity, there is also active in all this the working of the peculiarity of Jewish religiousness. But this peculiarity has been developed through the lives of those who always endeavoured to live opposed to the many, in the name of their God, who, in order not to become estranged from

Him, endured estrangement upon earth, to whom their faith never represented their advantage, to whom the community has never been the seat of convenience, to whom belief has always been both action and sacrifice. Whoever is a Jew has long been such contrary to his own interests, and under difficulties in regard to his career. If he is loyal to his religion, it can only be for the sake of religion; conviction is already a sort of carrying out. In merely belonging to the Jewish community there is some touch of the ideal; it means — with all the tension and paradox of the Jewish character — a peculiar style of life in the world.

All this has seldom been recognized. State and society have for the most part shown little understanding in regard to it. The children of Judaism have prayed and hoped for Zion and Jerusalem, but in many ways they have also manifested towards home and fatherland a constant faithfulness, — a faithfulness which for them is instinct with religion, and is the more genuine seeing that the chance of advancement or reward was seldom able to dim the purity of spiritual intention. They have always known and shown that any experienced ingratitude or misjudgment does not justify a desertion of duty or a lessening of obligation. They have preserved their attachment and loyalty in spite of all compulsory wanderings. Four centuries after religious passion, narrow-mindedness, and envy expelled their ancestors from their land, some of the descendants of the old Spanish Jews, (and they do not constitute the only instance) call themselves to this very day the sons of Spain, and preserve and cultivate the old Spanish language in their midst. Few examples of this kind are to be found in the history of the world. State and society have often been the enemies of Judaism; in many countries they have debased themselves to become the servants of those who sought to proselytize and convert. They have forgotten that every wrong done to an *individual* is a wrong to the whole community, and that if committed or tolerated by the state, it must ultimately turn against the state. There is an aspect of the history of Judaism which is an accusation against mankind. But those who suffered all these things remained the faithful ones, persistent optimists; in bitter and tormenting days there remained alive among them the hope that duty and sacrifice would in the end overcome all prejudice and narrow-



mindfulness. Moreover, any kindness or justice shown to them was never lost sight of or forgotten; the world has always found that gratitude and faithfulness are Jewish virtues.

"Victories" have been won over Judaism, but they were always only *victories of power* without risk or glory. À vaincre sans péril on triomphe sans gloire. What means have been applied to win Jews over to the ruling religions! But this endeavour has seldom had anything to do with religious zeal, or had anything much in common with any deep feeling for religion. It is true that among orthodox Protestants there exist well-intentioned missions for the conversion of the Jews, carried on with honest religious endeavour, and surely also with a devout love for Israel, which has often manifested itself in relation to Israel's enemies. Jews admit this willingly and frankly, though they aver not less emphatically, and with fearlessness, that they believe that their destiny is, not to be converted, but rather to convert. "My house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples." But the true religious feeling which these Protestant missions to the Jews often reveal has few parallels. The successes in relation to Judaism are usually of a purely worldly character.

Who were they, for the most part, who left Judaism, in order to belong to another religion? They were too often "believers", who went over to the other religion, in which they did *not* believe, or in which they *also* did not believe, believers who uttered with their lips a confession of faith which to their heart was either no truth or an untruth. This is significant: they who received them, and those who proffered the advantages of the change, could seldom have doubted the truthlessness of the conversion, or the insincerity of the convert's mind. How deep could a belief be which freed him who enters its gates from the obligation of belief? What self-respect could a religion have, which in order to acquire proselytes, renounced, denied and concealed itself? The pages of history, which tell of the persecutions of the Jews, fill us with horror for human madness and human degeneration. From the pages which tell of this soul-catching, carried out with state-provided trap and snare, in order to attract and win weak characters, even if they choose to remain unbelievers, all persons, with ethical or religious feeling, will always turn away in disgust.

Seldom has *conviction* ever caused anybody to turn his back on Judaism, seldom has conversion shown a spirit of courageous *sacrifice*. Usually the conversion has been an act of materialism. But in this there is some consolation. What better thing can be said of a religion than that it is almost always something earthly, something only too human, which induces men and women to go forth from the ranks of its adherents or that desertion only threatens it through a lack of moral stamina or conviction?

Indeed, in all the pains which Israel has had to endure there is also contained some elevating element. Judaism has to suffer numerous attacks almost every day, new and yet old; but do these attacks not betray something of a touching defence, a eulogy before the seat of the judge of truth? For what have been for the most part the weapons used in the fight against Judaism in ancient or in modern times? Some employed weapons of oppression, the deprivation of rights, and deeds of violence, others used the tools of misjudgment, of misrepresentation, and of falsehood. There is hardly an outrage which, committed against Judaism, did not appear as sovereign right; hardly an invention which, planned against Judaism, was not made to assume the appearance of reality, hardly a halftruth which, used in judgment against Judaism, was not regarded as entire truth. How small must be the confidence of those who almost invariably employ such means, and what importance, what right, must that possess against which such weapons, almost exclusively, are employed!

The history of the nations contains the vindication of Judaism. Wherever truth was victorious, and justice was permitted to abide, Judaism found welfare, understanding and acknowledgment. Wherever a feeling for humanity and for righteousness began to stir, a Jewish community was able to breathe in peace. The degradation of the Jews was never an isolated phenomenon, but only one incident, though the saddest, in a general enslavement. In the same way, their emancipation has everywhere been only a part, though a very significant part, of a liberation of an entire people. Whether they willed it or not, the rulers, statesmen and nations who laboured for true civilisation were the defenders and benefactors of the Jews. Consciously or unconsciously, every one who stood for the progress of morality has stood up for them.

If the Jews demand security for Judaism and its unrestricted existence, they need only ask for truth and straightforwardness in the land. There is no better vindication. To quote Ranke: "The greatest good fortune which can happen to any men is to defend the common cause in their own cause."

This may be some consolation in the face of sad occurrences, and it brings new justification to Jewish hopes in the future. When the Jews are concerned, it is not the exclusive concern of the Jews. Their claims are the claims of conscience, of the commandment. They do not ask that they should be honoured, but only that right and truth should be honoured. They do not desire to be treated with special benevolence, but only that others should learn to know them, to know what they are, and why. Judaism is open to all; so, too, are the religious treasures which it possesses, the religious goal which is its trust; he who wishes to see is able to see. Jews acknowledge the treasures possessed by other religions, especially by those sprung from the Jewish midst and out of the Jewish spirit. He who holds convictions, respects convictions. Filled with reverence for the task which it contains, the Jews realize what their religion really means and is. They know that there can be applied to it the words of one of the old Jewish sages: "The beginning bears witness to the end, and the end will at long last bear witness to the beginning."

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